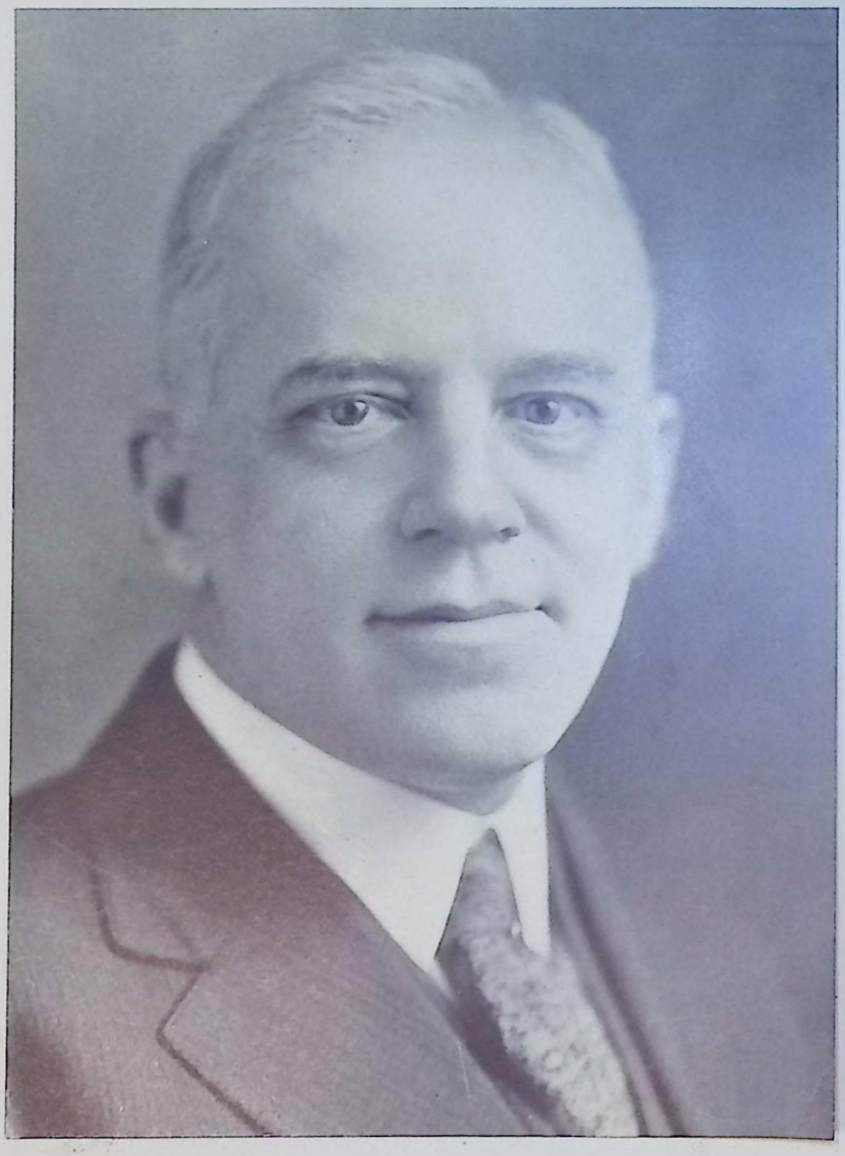
In Memoriam

The Rev. John M. Vander Meulen

D.D., LL.D.

1870 - 1936



THE REVEREND

John Marinus Vander Meulen

D.D., LL.D.

Late Professor of Doctrinal Theology in the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

JOINED THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

JUNE 7, 1936

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As a loving tribute

to the memory of my dear husband

I wish to share these many expressions

of affection and appreciation

Mary M. Vander Meulen

2-1-56

Gift of Dr. B.R. Leeuw, Jr.

Foreword

THE prophet Malachi tells us that a book of remembrance was written before the Lord for them that feared Him and thought upon His name. Such a book, we can be sure, is to be found in the library of Heaven to the memory of Dr. Vander Meulen. Its pages record his life in all its fullness—in both light and shadow—as no human book could do. But of such a one as he even an earthly book of remembrance can be full and overflowing. And this little book is offered out of the crowded memories of some of the people who loved Dr. Vander Meulen, people who are indebted to him for comfort and strength, and to whom there came, from him, a vision and gleam of the life triumphant and everlasting.

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Biographical Sketch

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Biographical Sketch

by Elizabeth G. Vander Meulen

The racial inheritance of Dr. Vander Meulen was unique, and could itself serve as an epitome of the political changes that have swept the continent of Europe. His parents came from the Netherlands; but the Netherlands had long been the melting pot of Europe. Though the name sounds typically Dutch, the Vandermeulens were really of French descent. Even more then than now, foreign names were translated into the vernacular as Dutch names are Anglicized today. His paternal grandmother was partly of German and Italian descent. She was the daughter of a race of sea captains, who ranged far and wide, as did the Yankee captains in our colonial days, bringing home spoils and stories from the icy floes of Greenland and the sultry plains of India. His mother came from one of the islands of Zeeland, where the Celtic strain has held its own since the days of Julius Caesar, as it has in the Channel Islands. Both she and her mother were distinctly Celtish both in appearance and temperament. So to the hardy and courageous Dutch strain was added a bit of the fire of the Celt, the logic of the Gaul, the artistry and eloquence of the Italian, and the German *gemuthlichkeit,* which was the matrix of their genius, but for which there is no equivalent in our unemotional language. Dr. Vander Meulen's second name, Marinus, his maternal grandfather's patronymic, harks back, I think, to the time of the Roman invasion. There are still many plainly Roman names in the Southern Netherlands.

But the important thing in the family history is the fact that twice they had exiled themselves for freedom and for conscience'

sake—first from France to Holland, and then from Holland to America. For exile does things to the human spirit. It must needs be that, wrenched away from the familiar ground beneath one's feet, from friends and kindred, from social position and a fixed means of livelihood, one's trust is drawn away from the fleeting and temporal and comes to rest itself on the spiritual and enduring realities of life.

The world owes much to its exiles for conscience' sake. Witness Abraham and Moses, Calvin, Bradford, and Roger Williams. Dr. Vander Meulen's grandfather had given up a lucrative position, while in the old country, to become the pastor of a despised and persecuted sect whose only offense, however, was that—like the Puritans—they refused to submit to political authority in religious matters. For years thereafter he led a laborious life, traveling in all kinds of vehicles and all kinds of weather and at all hours of the day and night in the service of his scattered congregations, and winning the soubriquet of "The Apostle of Zeeland." And when conditions in the old country finally became unbearable, he and a couple of other devoted souls, one of whom sacrificed his whole not inconsiderable fortune to the cause, succeeded in chartering three sailing vessels; and, after delays and difficulties which remind one of the days of the Puritans, they succeeded in transferring the whole congregation to the wilds of western Michigan. There they established a successful colony where their religious aims and ideals still find expression. Two young sons, Jacob and John, were a part of this migration, both entering the ministry, and the latter becoming the father of Dr. Vander Meulen.

Dr. Vander Meulen himself was born in the midst of the depression that followed the Civil War—the days of shinplaster currency, when even a silver three-cent piece was a rarity and there were no metal coins in circulation except nickels and coppers. Land, however, was still cheap and plentiful; and the hardy Dutch emigrants, dispossessed in their own country and at the mercy of all sorts of political and economic contingencies, were still flocking over in large numbers to go forth

and possess it. They were thrilled at the possibility of acquiring a farm of their own with the financial and spiritual independence that, in those days, still accompanied it. No hardship was considered too severe, no labor too great, that enabled them to accomplish this end. America was then still the land of opportunity. Conditions were hard; the age of steam and steel was yet in its infancy; but there was at least always work of some kind to be had, and a thrifty and hard-working man could still be assured of a competence and an independent old age. Also, there were no monopolies, and it did not take a fortune to establish a little business and defend oneself from ruinous competition.

It was a time of great expectations if also of small possessions, of plain living and high and wide thinking; of log cabins and rail fences and roads that were little more than trails; of barn-raisings and husking bees and spelling schools where the pursuit of gain and knowledge was thriftily combined with pleasure. There was little ready cash, but that was not such a serious matter in those days. Taxes were unbelievably low and could, at least in part, be worked out on the road, for the W. P. A. is not in essence a modern invention. The necessities of life, food and fuel, were cheap and abundant. And though there was that great incubus, the mortgage, with a fertile soil and growing markets it could be disposed of in time. So everybody, though poor, was cheerful and hopeful and hard-working. There was less wild gaiety but far more real cheerfulness than now.

Diversions were few and of home manufacture. Perhaps the most important was the singing school; kept *a la* Washington Irving by a Yankee—not an Ichabod Crane, however, but a jovial, gentlemanly, and thoroughly competent three-hundred-pounder. Himself the son of a Methodist preacher, he had a kindly feeling for the Dutch parson's family and showed them much kindness. And he succeeded in inspiring a great enthusiasm in Dr. Vander Meulen's boyish soul. To the grown-up young people of the neighborhood the singing school was, to

be sure, a much-prized diversion, affording, too, a chance to do a little "sparking" on the side. But to the little scion of the parsonage the singing school itself was a passion. He succeeded in enthusing a younger sister; and for hours on end they would sing till they both knew all the parts of every song; and so, perforce, did the rest of the family and all the neighbors as well. The ability thus gained to read music readily, and to lead a choir, stood him in good service in his own pioneer ministry. Among the formative influences of Dr. Vander Meulen's childhood, "Lafe Hollis's" singing school occupied a not unimportant place.

The only other diversion of an intellectual nature was the arrival of the *Youth's Companion,* when there was also always a race home from school to see who could lay hands on it first. For by that time the community was going modern and there was a biweekly mail. However, the youth is father to the man, and Dr. Vander Meulen, at the mature age of ten or eleven, proceeded to create some intellectual diversion for himself by organizing a debating society among his compeers, where such abstruse subjects were at first discussed as which is most indispensable to the human race, fire or water. Later the discussions took a more practical turn. Fortunately, about the time he had exhausted the resources of the country school the family moved to a parish near Holland, Michigan, where he could continue his studies at Hope College.

Dr. Vander Meulen was, at this time, only a lad of twelve or thirteen, when he entered the preparatory department of the college. The college, too, was still in its formative period and, though it had some good men, boasted nothing like the equipment or staff that are considered a matter of course now. But the little country schools did develop initiative and the faculty for independent thought. And Dr. Vander Meulen brought to his new environment two great gifts—enthusiasm and sympathy—those eyes of the soul, the possession of which enables one to learn everywhere and from everybody. His capacity for hero worship and his enthusiasm for some of his teachers

were unlimited. Though he was a conscientious student, the study of mathematics and even languages, at that date, left him cold. But presently his studies in literature opened up for him a new world, especially romantic literature with its poetry and drama. The house now resounded to the sonorous strains of "Marmion" and "The Prisoner of Chillon." He had a wonderful memory and a sonorous voice, and enjoyed exercising them, though I do not think he ever realized how unusual these gifts were. He took them for granted. A sheer exuberance of spirit was characteristic of his youth, one manifestation of which was a love of teasing those he cared most about, which remained with him through his life. A serious side of his character was, of course, also developing; and during a religious revival at the college in 1888 he had a deep religious experience, accepting Christ as his Saviour.

It was not at this time, however, that he decided to study for the ministry. He leaned more to politics and the bar. But now he began seriously to cultivate his gift of oratory, and was the valedictorian of his class. To gain money to pursue his education and, because he was still undecided as to his career, he accepted a position in Orange City, Iowa, where the Reformed Church had recently established an academy. He made warm friends there and did much to bring up the standard of scholarship. There he spent as much time as he could spare in the local courts, studying forensic procedure. But the venality and triviality of much litigation disillusioned him, and the death of his beloved mother was the final influence that turned his steps in the direction of the Christian ministry. He began his theological studies in Princeton, with its wonderful library, but the climate of New Jersey did not agree with him and he finished his studies at McCormick Seminary in Chicago.

Chicago—"hog butcher of the world, toolmaker, stacker of wheat, player with the nation's railways, shoveling, wrecking, planning, building, breaking, rebuilding" Chicago! But there was another side to the city, as witness the serene beauty of the Columbian Exposition, which had just been held there.

There was also McCormick Seminary, Hull House, the Moody Institute. He learned much in Chicago.

Two short pastorates followed in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he made many friends, especially among the members of the church consistories, whom he always remembered gratefully, as they so faithfully upheld his youthful hands. He was enough of an introvert, as we would say now, to write studious sermons, and enough of an extrovert, with warm human sympathies, to be a successful pastor. He made a great deal of the young people in his charges, providing them with wholesome fun as well as religious instruction, and was popular, in consequence, both with them and with their parents. His lifelong sympathy with the underprivileged and unfortunate was marked even in his early ministry, and his natural predilection for any who suffered made him always ready to spend unlimited time with the sick, the lonely, and the afflicted, and increasingly more so as the years broadened and widened his sympathies.

In this early period of his ministry, as always, he had a warm enthusiasm for evangelism. The Reformed Church having established a mission in the newly opened territory of Oklahoma, he was attracted to a position as home missionary to do his little bit toward shaping the destinies of the new commonwealth. "All of which I saw," sings Homer, "and part of which I was." It was a radically new experience. A greater contrast to the community in which he had spent his youth could hardly be imagined. For the people of his childhood, while also pioneers, had been self-controlled, religious, law-abiding. There was not a saloon in the township. An oath was hardly ever heard. The homes, though simple, were clean and comfortable. Schools and churches were considered primal necessities. In Oklahoma he met another sort of pioneering. Primitive cooking, primitive standards of cleanliness, adventurers good and bad from all over the Union, waiting to take advantage of the land open for settlement. Blacklegs, sharpers, saloonkeepers,

all lying in wait to take advantage of others and to exploit the thoughtless youth of the community.

His life was more than once in danger from this class, but he found many people, too, who had been brought up in Christian surroundings and who were willing to co-operate to bring about a better state of affairs. An abandoned butcher shop was, by the expenditure of much soap and elbow grease, converted into a chapel. But there were other things needed besides a chapel. There was really no place where the homeless and frequently homesick youth of the community could gather except the saloon, and no diversion except that which a deck of cards provided. So Dr. Vander Meulen set out to remedy that defect, and planned a lean-to to the chapel that could serve as a recreation room. Lumber was scarce, and his skill as a carpenter was about on a par with that of Emerson, who boasted that he could split a shingle into seven different pieces with one nail. But a man can do what he must; and with the help of his cowboy friends, with whom he was popular, and using any kind of material that came to hand, he succeeded in building a reading and recreation room and making a levy on the church back home for material to furnish it. It was well patronized. He even succeeded in organizing a dramatic club and giving plays, and the church services, too, became popular, though the congregation was composed of hearers of all creeds and none at all, and there were no two hymnbooks in the community alike. But his health was not long equal to the hardships of pioneer life. Being by nature a student and particularly interested in the study of psychology, which was then being reconstructed on a more scientific basis, he accepted the offer of a position in his Alma Mater.

Here he was professor of Psychology and Pedagogy for six years, for two years of which period he also served as pastor of Hope Church, a leading church of the city of Holland. In 1909, upon resigning his professorship and receiving the degree of Doctor of Divinity from his Alma Mater, he became the pastor of the Hamilton Grange Reformed Church of New

York City. During the three years of his pastorate there he attended Columbia University, but his work for his Ph.D. was interrupted by his acceptance of a call from the Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Kentucky. He served this "Fifth Avenue Church of the South," in a brilliant and far-reaching ministry, for five years. From 1917 to 1920 he was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Oak Park, Illinois, one of the largest and most influential churches of the Chicago Presbytery. In 1920 the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary called him to become its President, and, as its head, he greatly enlarged its endowment funds, the faculty, and the number of its students. After ten years he resigned the presidency of the Seminary to give his rare gifts for teaching to the subject of Theology. His eager and effective work in this subject would shortly have resulted in a new textbook on Systematic Theology when, at the completion of the Seminary year in 1936, he was given a year's leave of absence because of ill health. But his earthly task was done, and in a few short weeks he heard from lips divine the words that make any life complete—"Well done . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Funeral Services

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Funeral Services

DR. VANDER MEULEN, following his year's work at the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, was on his way to his summer pastorate of the Elberon Memorial Church at Elberon, New Jersey, when he stopped for a visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Priebe, River Forest, Illinois, where he suddenly passed away on Sunday evening, June 7, 1936.

Two funeral services were held. The first was on Tuesday afternoon, June 9, at the First Presbyterian Church, Oak Park, Illinois, of which Dr. Vander Meulen was pastor from 1917 to 1920. The second service was held on Wednesday, June 10, in the Hope Memorial Chapel, Hope College, Holland, Michigan, where he was formerly a professor and pastor. The interment was made in the Pilgrim Home Cemetery at Holland.

Before the funeral service in the First Presbyterian Church in Oak Park, Illinois, a brief service for the immediate family was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Priebe in River Forest. Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Oak Park, Illinois, conducted this service, during which he quoted the following poem:

When I Am Gone

No funeral gloom for me, dear love,
When I am gone.
I want the windows open wide,
The sunshine in, the bird's sweet song.
Put flowers all about me,
Their colors everywhere;
Let their fragrance be about me,

Filling the sweetened air.
I shall but go a little way ahead,
I'll live, but love you still—
There are no dead.
This life is but the steppingstone,
To that life over there.
Lovely as this world is,
That one more fair.
I shall escape the sorrow
And the pain.
Your loss, if so it be,
Must be my gain.
So think of me,
But do not weep.
No death can conquer
Love like ours—deep!
And soon, so soon,
Upon that better shore,
We two shall meet again,
To part no more.

—*May B. Mason.*

First Presbyterian Church

OAK PARK, ILLINOIS

June 9, 1936

FUNERAL SERVICE

JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D.D., LL.D.

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Order of Service

INVOCATION
The Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D.
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Oak Park, Illinois.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN—"Hark! Hark, My Soul"

SCRIPTURE—Psalm 23; I Corinthians 15:19-26, 35-58; Revelation 7:13-17; 21:1-4
The Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D.

ADDRESS
The Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D.

ADDRESS
The Rev. Charles H. Pratt, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.
Professor of Missions and Evangelism, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN—"How Firm a Foundation"

PRAYER
The Rev. W. D. Chamberlain, Ph.D., D.D.
Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

BENEDICTION
The Rev. W. D. Chamberlain, Ph.D., D.D.

Prayer

The Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D.

Eternal God, who art our refuge and strength, our very present help in trouble, we thank Thee that we can look beyond the seen to the unseen, and from the sorrows which weigh us down to the unchanging goodness laid up for us in Thy heart. In the hour of sorrow, Thou art our comfort; in the hour of loss, Thou dost, through the risen Christ, give unto us that sense of gain by which defeat is swallowed up in victory, and death in life eternal. We thank Thee for him whom Thou hast taken unto Thyself. We bless Thee for Thy goodness to him through his earthly life, for the gifts with which Thou didst endow him, and for the spirit which enabled him to use those gifts so faithfully and well. We bless Thee for the service he rendered so loyally, fitting him for the higher and ampler service of Heaven. We bless Thee, too, with full hearts, for the memories which even death cannot take away; for his example of the chivalrous and courageous Christian; for the fragrant influence of his life; and the grace mediated through him to others. While the world is the poorer for his passing, we thank Thee that it is the richer because he lived therein. And now we commend ourselves to Thy sovereign care, praying especially that Thou wilt be the Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless, that Thou wilt sustain and strengthen them through the days, consoling them by Thy comfort and sustaining them by Thy grace. May they ever feel that, no matter what the weight of life's load, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Through Him who brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

Address

The Rev. J. W. G. Ward, D.D., Litt.D.

Text: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John."—John 1:6.

We cannot think of those words without linking them with the name of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen. May I be allowed as a successor in this historic pulpit, made more illustrious by the service our friend rendered here, to express my own sense of personal loss as well as admiration and affection? That is a feeling shared by many who are with us today.

During his ministry from 1917-1920 he was revealed as a prophetic voice. He believed then, as he did later, in the supreme worth of the pulpit. Preaching, as a medium of saving and blessing human souls, was the passion of his life. In that he was right. He felt that, important as the other duties devolving upon the minister of a church like this, his paramount task was to proclaim to men the unsearchable riches of Christ. Those who sat at his feet knew that he was, as we have said, a prophet of the Lord. Under the inspiration of the divine Spirit he brought a well-stored mind, keen logical faculties, dramatic power and oratory to serve as a medium for the message entrusted to him. But in addition, he not only proclaimed the truth, but also embodied it in his life. His love for God was manifest in his love for man. He gave himself to his ministry here with unremitting zeal, and with lavish expenditure of nervous and physical strength. That is one reason why, in those four years, he made such a deep impression upon the life of this community.

It was too much to hope that such gifts and consecrated ability would fail of wider recognition. In 1920, he was called to the presidency of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. For the past sixteen years he sought to direct the minds of men called apart to the holy ministry. He gave them of the wealth of his experience as a humble follower of Christ and a successful preacher of the Word. But he did more. He laid on them the spell of a manly, virile, saintly personality. His mind had both breadth and vision. His sympathies flowed out to every good cause. His counsel and helping hand were at the disposal of every perplexed soul. He was tolerant and understanding. It was only when questions of principle arose, when loyalty to the faith demanded it, that his sterner side was manifest. Then he was adamant. Courageous as a lion, humble as a child, immovable as a mountain, transparent as the lakes he loved so well, he was indeed a man among men and a prophet of the Most High God.

In his new book, published just two weeks before his death, he gives a finished statement of his faith. He makes an interesting reference in the first chapter to the memorial service for William A. Douglass, a distinguished resident of Oak Park for many years, and the note of victorious faith which marked that service for a triumphant soul. The book ends on the same note. Referring to one of the hymns of the Church he says, in the final paragraph, "The poet comes, in the last verse, to the psychological mood which can come only as a result of such thinking. Fear of death seems to fade away. He cries:

" 'Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee!' "

The prayer of Elisha, as he saw Elijah being borne from his side, might well be repeated by every minister and layman alike: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

Funeral Address

The Rev. Charles H. Pratt, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.

Of all the men I have known, of none could it be as appropriately said—

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark."

If any of us here this afternoon must shed tears, let us do so, but not in sorrow, for that would be unworthy of our dear friend. Let them be rather tears of joy that God gave us such a great soul as he.

This is neither the time nor the place for a memorial address, but rather a very brief tribute of a friend to my friend. Truly Heaven is nearer and richer since he has gone there.

Sadhu Singh, the great Indian mystic, said somewhere that when our souls leave the body they tarry near the loved ones for a few days or longer before they go on in the next great adventure. I do not know whether that be true, but, if it is, then the great spirit of our friend is near us now.

As nearly as any man I have known Dr. Vander Meulen filled my ideal of a truly great soul. I do not know if he was greater in mind or heart. He was great, first of all, as a teacher. That was his first lifework and his last. Many of those who sat under him will be greater in life because he led out and developed their growing minds. What insight into truth and how well he presented it! He was a great teacher, but he was greater still as a preacher. Few men of our day could take the truth of God and make it so live in the pulpit as he did. I have heard him take some passage of Scripture of which I have said

to myself as he began, "Well, there cannot be much in that"; but as he went on one was more and more held, and in the end came away saying, "I have seen God today."

Undoubtedly one of the great preachers of our day, he was great again as an administrator. When he took the presidency of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, its fortunes were at low ebb. As one of its directors before coming to it as a professor, and now as its oldest professor in point of service, I have cause to know that Dr. Vander Meulen as an administrator was a great man. In the years he was its head he built it into one of the worthy theological schools of the nation.

Once more, Dr. Vander Meulen was great in mind. He had kept abreast of the intellectual movements of our time. Whether in modern psychology or the Barthian theology, he was equally at home.

Again, he was great in faith. How well I remember in recent conversations the gaiety and clearness of his faith. In an hour when the minds of many have lost faith in the Eternal God, for one who knew so well the fields of human knowledge and whose faith yet shone like the morning star, that is true greatness.

Once again he was great in humility. No man can truthfully be called great in the Christian life who does not illustrate, in his own life, humility. With all the honors that life showered upon him, he was always humble as a child.

But he was greatest of all as a friend. Those loved him best who knew him best. I overheard two ladies talking in an elevator the other day and one said to the other, "What are we going to do without him here?" A little while ago, a lady whom he dearly loved said to him, "I wish I could know where our loved ones go when they leave us here and what they do in the place to which they go." Dr. Vander Meulen shared in that deep and reverent curiosity about that world beyond our view. Now he knows, but were it possible he would send back a message to her. There was nothing of any sort that he could do that he would not undertake for a friend.

Truly a great man has fallen in Israel this day.

Prayer

The Rev. W. D. Chamberlain, Ph.D., D.D.

OUR GRACIOUS FATHER, we gather here in sorrow at the loss of our friend, but it is not the sorrow of those who have no hope. Our very sorrow prompts us to give Thee thanks, for it brings us a deeper sense of Thy nearness. We are made more conscious of Thine overseeing eye and Thine infinite, eternal, unchanging love, because in Thy providence Thou didst permit Dr. Vander Meulen to labor until his work was ended, and then quietly pass on to Thee. He went on to Thee as he wanted to go.

We thank Thee, our Father, for our departed friend. We thank Thee for the simplicity of his faith, for he walked with Thee with the simple trust of a little child. We thank Thee for the depth of his love to Thee. How often when the ray of our own love for Thee had grown faint, he kindled a new warmth in our hearts and made us ashamed of drifting away from Thee. We thank Thee for the warmth of his love for his friends. It has been a blessed privilege to share that love. We thank Thee for the tenderness of his affection for his family. In these days when so many family circles are broken or loveless, it meant much to us to see the strength and tenderness of the love that bound him to his own household. We thank Thee for his gifts as a teacher: for his ability to make a Christian truth clear and vivid to our minds. We thank Thee for his power as a pulpiteer. How we rejoice when we think of the way in which his preaching has lifted us to the throne of grace! How many times when we had lost a sense of the reality of Thy truth, Thy servant would make it live for us with a

new vitality. We thank Thee for him and all that he has meant to us.

And now we pray Thy blessing upon his loved ones. Deal very gently with them, we pray Thee. Comfort their hearts in this hour of sorrow. Make Thy face to shine upon them and be gracious unto them. Lift up Thy countenance upon them and give them peace—the peace that passeth all understanding.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Hope Memorial Chapel

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

June 10, 1936

FUNERAL SERVICE

The REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D.D., LL.D.

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Order of Service

THE REV. EDWARD D. DIMNENT, D.D., *Presiding*

ORGAN PRELUDE—*"Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me"* . *J. E. Gould*

SCRIPTURE READING
The Rev. T. W. Davidson, D.D.
Pastor of Hope Church, Holland, Mich.

PRAYER
The Rev. T. W. Davidson, D.D.

ADDRESS
The Rev. Andrew K. Rule, Ph.D.
Professor of Apologetics and Church History, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

ANTHEM—*"Hark! Hark, My Soul"*
Hope College Chorus and Hope Church Choir

ADDRESS
The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.
Pastor, The Highland Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN—*"How Firm a Foundation"*

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION
The Rev. E. J. Blekkink, D.D.
President-Emeritus, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan.

ORGAN POSTLUDE—*"Crossing the Bar"* . . . *J. Barnby*

Funeral Address

The Rev. Andrew K. Rule, Ph.D.

One approaches this occasion with very mixed feelings. Anyone who knew Dr. Vander Meulen at all well will know that he would not want anything said in his praise. Also, it is my almost invariable custom, on such occasions as this, to reduce personal references to a minimum and to speak of the grace of God as it is recorded in the Scriptures. Thus my custom and natural desire to fulfill the wish of my friend combine to make me want to speak to you of God's grace from the Bible. But, for all that, I shall speak instead of the grace of God as given to us in the life of a man.

And he *was* a man—rugged and strong, genuine and true from the innermost core of his being. Please permit me to mention one or two illustrations of the truth of that statement.

We often have to do with people who seem to stand nowhere. Or, if they do, they themselves do not seem to know where they stand. Or else you find it impossible to discover where they stand. You may speak with them for an hour, and you know no more about their real convictions, if they have any, than you did before you started. But anyone who knew John Vander Meulen with any intimacy could generally tell where he stood on any vital issue; and, if you did not know, you could easily find out exactly where he stood. And how he stood by his convictions! You could bank on him! He was a man!

A prominent executive in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., said to me, a few years ago, that he did not expect always to be right. "If I can be right," he said, "fifty-five or sixty per cent of the time, I feel that I am doing pretty well." John Vander Meulen made surprisingly few mistakes; but he was human,

and he made some. If you felt that he had made a mistake, you could go to him, if you did it in the right spirit, and tell him how you felt and why. He would listen to you, think over what you were saying, possibly argue the case with you a bit, but when he became convinced that you were right and he had been wrong there was no shilly-shallying, no seeking for excuses, no effort to place the blame on someone else. He would admit his mistake, and, if the error had harmed anyone, he would seek to make it right. It takes a man to do that. He was a man!

Again, he had the natural humility of a real man—not that kind of assumed humility which was an open invitation to you to deny its justification, but a humility that was genuine and true. You saw it in his relations with people, and in his relation to the Cause. When I first knew him, nine years ago, he was already full of honors. You would never suspect that, however, as you watched his treatment of those who were under him in social or official status. In recent months, I have heard a Christian minister refer to a certain official as "only the janitor," and to another as "only a stenographer." To John Vander Meulen there were no such people. To him they were men and women first—fellow members with him of the household of faith. He treated them as such, without condescension or snobbishness; and how they loved him! In his relations with his colleagues, there was no sign of envy or jealousy when honor came to them, but a spirit of generosity and brotherhood that rejoiced in their successes. And quite often a close scrutiny of the circumstances would reveal that he himself had had something to do with bringing those successes about. You saw his real humility, too, in the natural and unconscious way in which he gave himself to any worthy cause. If something had to be done to further a good cause, you would never find him standing on the dignity that was his as pastor of a great church or president of a great seminary. He forgot all that, and went ahead to do the lowly but important task, interested only that it was well done. He was a man!

And he was a *Christian* man. He believed, with his intellect, in the Calvinistic interpretation of the evangelical faith. He knew it well; he knew the facts and reasons which prove it to be correct; and he accepted it firmly. But, even better than that, he lived it. Many a time, when the going was rough and things seemed to be going wrong, you might watch his mind searching for the divine providence which, as his faith assured him, must be in the adversity. The last sermon he preached was on the topic "Christ and His Church First." He did not choose that topic. It was chosen for him; but no topic could better have expressed his life.

He was a great preacher; but everyone knows that, and I shall not dwell on it today. I will merely repeat the obvious facts that he knew *what* to preach; he had studied deeply the theory of *how* to preach it; nature had endowed him with the temperament of a preacher; and he had developed the gift by careful practice in accordance with the best theory. He was a great preacher.

He was a great teacher, too. He taught Psychology here in Hope College; but you know more about that than I do. When I first went to the Louisville Seminary, he was its president, and its professor of Homiletics. He could not only teach young men the science of good preaching, but he could impart to them a feeling for the art. He could then go into a pulpit and give them a wonderful example of great preaching. But, better than that, he had the creative gift of kindling in them a vital spark. And many a young minister is doing splendid preaching today because of what he learned from John Vander Meulen in the Homiletics department of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.

As a teacher, I knew him most intimately when he had resigned the presidency and been transferred to the chair of Doctrinal Theology. My work in Apologetics brought me into the most intimate contacts with him as he taught Theology; and there was one class, running through the whole year, which we taught together. He would teach one part of it, when I would

be present, and I would teach another part in his presence. I used to marvel at the skill with which he would take some very difficult doctrine and make it clear and intelligible to the students. Not only that, but he could so often take a doctrine which they did not want to believe and make it attractive to them. No man living knew his theology teaching more intimately than I did, and—I say it deliberately—he was a very great teacher of Theology.

He was a great seminary administrator. Though he thought that he had no gift for raising money and that he did not like doing it, I believe that secretly he must have found something enjoyable about it. In any case, he raised large sums of money for the Seminary, and placed it on a remarkably secure foundation. There was nothing partial about his educational administration. His real interests were in Theology and Apologetics; but, of the four chairs that were endowed in the Seminary under his leadership, one was in Religious Education, one in Missions, and one in Homiletics; and only after these were endowed did he seek to establish a chair in the subject which, even as a student, he had himself preferred—Apologetics.

A real man; a Christian man; a great preacher; a great teacher; a great administrator; and now a great victory. He believed with all his heart in eternal life and in the resurrection of the body. Now, he has entered into life that is life indeed. We see as in a glass, darkly, but he now sees face to face; we know in part, but now he knows even as also he is known. The chief thing about a Christian is that he loves Christ best of all; and the chief desire of one who loves Christ in that way is to be with Him where He is. John Vander Meulen now has that joy, and we his friends will rejoice in his triumph. And this body, which we lay away for a time, will still be joined to Christ. Our Saviour will not forget it. He will raise it up in His good time, purged and glorified; He will restore it to the already glorified spirit, and so shall John Vander Meulen dwell completely with the Lord. And Heaven will be more heavenly for us and for thousands of his friends because he is there.

One more word, in closing. A life like this is not lived alone. Those who knew John Vander Meulen best could discern in all the finest things that he did the sweet and gracious, if unobtrusive, influence of one who is with us today. And to them was given a son, who has already begun to walk worthily in their footsteps. We want you two to know that all of us here, and many others in many places in this land, love you both for what you are, and for his sake. We want that knowledge to cheer and comfort you; and we earnestly desire you to know what He meant when He said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."

Thank God for John Vander Meulen.

Funeral Address

The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.

I turn, this afternoon, to a text which I know was a familiar word with our friend whom we honor today, and which I have heard him often quote, and which I believe especially describes his own great life of service for his Lord. They are the words which Jesus used to describe John the Baptist: "He was a burning and a shining light," John 5:35. And I should like to preface these words of Jesus with those of the apostle John: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John"—he was a burning and a shining light.

He was a man sent from God. I know that to be true because he was God's man sent to me, as to many others. Never can there be a higher bond than that of spiritual fatherhood. The great truth of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is not in His consequent sinlessness, but in the mighty truth of the Fatherhood of God. And Dr. Vander Meulen was my spiritual father. Whatever other influences God brought to bear upon my life he was sent of God to me. In all my tender and crowding memories of him there is that unforgettable vision of him, himself a young man, preaching the unsearchable riches of God and leading my careless and wayward young manhood to the foot of the Cross. That was, perhaps, one of the least things he did in his commission from the Most High, but it was the greatest thing ever done for me, and he never ceased to be God's messenger in love and friendship and companionship and inspiration, always bringing God nearer to me. Whatever else I know today, I know that here was a man sent from God.

And like that other John, he was a great shining light. But even more he was a reflection of Him who said, "I am the light."

When Jesus came to be the revelation of God to man it was not as abstract truth, but a warm living truth, clothed in the flesh of humanity. He was a light that drew men unto the Father because of His humanness.

How Jesus did like men, all sorts and conditions of men! The first thing, and the only thing the gospel says about Jesus' choosing the men who were to build His church is that "He chose twelve, that they might be with him." And how drawn they were to Him, so that, though they understood little as yet, they left everything to follow Him! There was a humanness about Jesus which drew men and always has drawn them. He was God in terms that men could understand; God clothed with humanness. He was a light which attracted. And what a humanness there was about Dr. Vander Meulen! Like his Master, he was a man of great affections. Jesus could never have been the Saviour of men without liking men, loving to be with them and near them. It is a great quality to like folks. And Dr. Vander Meulen had that quality to a marked degree. It manifested itself in his preaching, and in every presentation of the truth he so loved to proclaim. Many are the souls who were won to the Master by his special gift of so holding aloft the light that its shining was a great attraction.

And his was the shining light of a good hope and a joy in the Lord. It is inherent in light that it brightens. When there is a true light there is no darkness. His own Christianity, and his proclaiming of it, was of the buoyant, uplifting, shining kind. I cannot recall ever hearing him preach a somber sermon. In him was the shining light which sometimes warns, but always, above everything else, was a beacon light to a safe and sheltered port, and the joy of coming home to God. None ever knew from him the sadness of a light that merely revealed sin. From him there went forth, in the name of his Lord, the shimmering, gleaming light of a Christianity that cheers and brightens and makes glad.

His, too, was a light of amazing clarity. His was a keenness of mind brilliant in its shining. That was God's native

gift to him, which he took from God's hand, and nurtured and added to it, by much study and much diligence. His mind was a sparkling mind. And his the striking ability to take of the profound things of God and make them clear. His was the simplicity of greatness. He caught the method, as well as the spirit, of the Master whom he served. It was said of Jesus that the common people heard Him gladly. It was because they could understand Him. He spoke their language. He touched them where they lived. And God blessed our brother with that high mentality of clear thinking and simplicity of expression that made the path to God unshadowed and unconfused for men and women alike, of high culture, or of none.

And, as Jesus said of that other John, he was not only a shining, he was a burning light. There was flame in his service of his God. There was passion in his heart, fire in his soul, depth in his convictions. His dominant characteristic, like that of his Master, was a steadfast purpose. Like Paul he said, and meant it with every fiber of his being, "I am persuaded, I know whom I have believed." He was dead sure about the gospel he proclaimed. He was unshaken in his faith. He was a man of burning convictions. All strong character is an inheritance of deep convictions. What every man needs in his life is something that he believes with a flaming constancy in the midst of all contrary desires and opposing whims. It is not merely the brilliant mind that does things. It is the mind that is controlled by the hidden fires of a great zeal.

There were two men who had a part in the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Erasmus was one. He was an intellectual, but not a little afraid of consequences. He was a brilliant light only. Luther also held in his heart the light of God, but it was a burning light. What he thought traveled from his mind to his heart, and it led him to stand before earth's greatest authority of that day to say, "Here I stand, God help me, I cannot do otherwise." Dr. Vander Meulen's light was a burning light always. It took fire, as only such a heart can take fire, through personal communication

with its Master, that knows Him as friend and companion, as Saviour and Lord. There were no smoldering fires on the hearthstone of his heart.

When Abraham Lincoln stood on the battlefield of Gettysburg to pay tribute to the soldier dead, as we are met today to pay tribute to this fallen hero in the battle of the Lord, Mr. Lincoln said: "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here." And it matters little what we say here today. And what we say, or think, is meaningless without his shining and burning light bringing us nearer to the Lord he so passionately served.

We are told that there was a memorable scene that took place at the burial of the poet Longfellow. A notable company gathered at the poet's funeral. And among them Emerson came up from Concord. He was a very old man then, and his brilliant and majestic mental powers were in eclipse. He stood for a long, long time looking down into the quiet dead face of Longfellow, but said nothing. At last he turned sadly away, and as he did so he remarked to those who stood reverently by, "The gentleman we are burying today was a sweet and beautiful character, but I forget his name." That is the glory of a good name. It is not the name that is important, but what it stands for. And even as the poet's songs, if not his name, sing on in the hearts of men, so the burning and the shining light which our brother tended so faithfully and exemplified so nobly will continue to shine and burn in the hearts of countless men and women who heard from his passionate lips the old, old, story, and who were taken to the foot of the Cross, and by God's grace, through him were led to see Him who is the Light of men.

Samuel Rutherford in his little village parish at Anworth was disturbed in his ministry because it seemed so fruitless. He pled for just one soul and he wrote:

"Oh! if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My Heaven will be two Heavens,
In Immanuel's land."

The number is legion of those for whom Dr. Vander Meulen pointed the way, and who will bid him welcome, and make his Heaven a countless Heaven, in the land where God Himself is the shining and burning light thereof.

John Bunyan might have been writing about this great soul today when he wrote of Mr. Valiant-for-truth—"After this it was noised abroad that Mr. Valiant-for-truth was taken with a summons . . . and had this for a token that the summons was true: 'That his pitcher was broken at the fountain.' When he understood it, he called for his friends and told them of it. Then said he: 'I am going to my fathers, and though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder.' When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river side, into which as he went he said, 'Death, where is thy sting?' And as he went down deeper, he said, 'Grave, where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

Memorial Services

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Second Presbyterian Church

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

MEMORIAL SERVICE

to

The REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D.D., LL.D.

Sunday, June 14, 1936

4:00 P. M.

DR. PHILIP F. BARBOUR, *Presiding*

PRELUDE—*"I Know That My Redeemer Liveth" . . . Handel*

INVOCATION

The Rev. Teunis E. Gouwens, D.D.
Pastor, Second Presbyterian Church

HYMN—*"Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand"*

SCRIPTURE LESSON—*The Twenty-Third Psalm*

The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.
Pastor, Highland Presbyterian Church

PRAYER

The Rev. Horace Cady Wilson, D.D.
Pastor, Warren Memorial Presbyterian Church

ANTHEM—*"Hark! Hark, My Soul" . . . . . Shelley*

ADDRESS—*"The Theologian"*

The Rev. John R. Sampey, D.D., LL.D.
President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

ADDRESS—*"The Teacher"*

The Rev. Frank H. Caldwell, Ph.D., D.D.
President, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

ADDRESS—*"The Pastor"*

The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.

ADDRESS—*"The Churchman"*

The Rev. Horace Cady Wilson, D.D.

ADDRESS—*"The Friend"*

The Rev. Jesse L. Cotton, D.D., LL.D.
Professor-Emeritus, Old Testament Exegesis, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

ADDRESS—*"The Minister of the Second Presbyterian Church"*

The Rev. Teunis E. Gouwens, D.D.

BENEDICTION

The Rev. Teunis E. Gouwens, D.D.

RESPONSE

"Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh;
Shadows of the evening steal across the sky.

. . . . . .

When the morning wakens, then may I arise
Pure, and fresh, and sinless in Thy holy eyes."

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Theologian

The Rev. John R. Sampey, D.D., LL.D.

I COUNT it a privilege, as President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, to have part in this memorial service in honor of a distinguished professor in the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. The relations of our two institutions have been most cordial throughout their history. Dr. Charles R. Hemphill, the first President of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, studied with Dr. John A. Broadus of the Baptist Seminary, attending his lectures on New Testament Interpretation with as much pleasure and profit as the young men who thronged his classroom.

Louisville knew Dr. Vander Meulen as a gifted and eloquent preacher during his pastorate of the Second Presbyterian Church, prior to his election to the chair of Homiletics in the Seminary. While in many theological schools the chair of Theology has lost its pre-eminence, Dr. Vander Meulen's transfer six years ago to this department was regarded by the trustees as a promotion, and was so accepted by Dr. Vander Meulen.

While six years is all too short for the publication of a major treatise in systematic theology, Dr. Vander Meulen's lecture notes covered the entire field, and he had in mind the preparation of a book embodying his theological views and convictions.

In the absence of an elaborate and studied treatise, we are fortunate in having from the pen of this distinguished preacher and scholar a most interesting and inspiring volume entitled *The Faith of Christendom,* which was published only a few weeks prior to his call to his reward. The book is an exposition of the Apostles' Creed in fourteen lectures or sermons. The author is at his best in presenting the great doctrines of the Christian faith in the form of addresses or sermons. This method brings into play all Dr. Vander Meulen's gifts as a

preacher, along with his ability as a thinker to state clearly and to defend with vigor the doctrines of the Christian faith.

It was my privilege to hear three of the sermons out of a series of seven delivered in the Broadway Baptist Church. They were admirable examples of doctrinal preaching. Naturally the preacher stated the articles of the Apostles' Creed as commonly understood by Christians, giving also the objections and modifications of modern liberals. In stating the views of scholars whose views he opposed, Dr. Vander Meulen was careful to present their arguments as strongly as they could be put. He lost no time attacking men of straw. His clear, frank, and fair presentation of opposing views disarms the unbeliever and confirms the faith of the believer.

Now that our friend has passed into the life beyond, I have read with added interest the closing sermon in his book, on "The Life Everlasting." He shows that the life after death, according to the orthodox theology, is divided into two periods.

> "The first may be called Paradise; the second Heaven. Paradise for the believer begins at death and lasts until the return of Christ and its accompanying resurrection of the bodies of men. Heaven begins with the resurrection of the body and is from that time on through all eternity."

Referring to the general belief that in Paradise the redeemed are disembodied spirits, Dr. Vander Meulen remarks:

> "But while they do not have the glorious resurrection body, it is a reasonable question whether even in Paradise their state is such a discarnate one as has sometimes been supposed. There might conceivably be such a thing for them as a temporary body. If Moses and Elijah, the Old Testament saints, had such a body when they came down to talk with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, it is not hard to believe that this may be true of all saints."

It is a most attractive picture that Dr. Vander Meulen gives of "the life everlasting," with its amazing growth in Knowledge, its heightened Fellowship, its joyous Worship, its sublimated Work.

Our noble brother has entered upon the joys of Paradise; the joys of Heaven are yet future to him, and to all of us who hope for our Lord's appearing.

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Teacher

The Rev. Frank Hill Caldwell, Ph.D., D.D.

Dr. Vander Meulen was such a versatile man that a really adequate summary of his work as a teacher should ideally include the three definite periods of his teaching—that of his younger days as a professor of Psychology and Pedagogy in Hope College, Holland, Michigan; that of his occupancy of the chair of Homiletics in Louisville Seminary for ten years, from 1920 to 1930; and that of his last six years as professor of Doctrinal Theology in Louisville Seminary, a chair which he assumed under circumstances which were in themselves a tribute to him as a teacher. Probably there is no chair in a seminary which is more difficult to fill satisfactorily than that of Doctrinal Theology. When that chair became vacant by the retirement of Dr. Whaling, Dr. Vander Meulen taught some of the courses temporarily while looking for a permanent professor. So impressively did he present the subject, that at the end of the year the students petitioned him to take the work permanently, which he graciously consented to do.

I cannot, with firsthand knowledge, speak of him in the first and third periods of his teaching, for I was a student of his only during the second period, when he taught the art of preaching—an art of which he himself was pre-eminently a master. Therefore, in what I say of him, I must of necessity omit some of his distinctive characteristics in the other two periods of his teaching career, though it may be assumed that all these periods have much in common.

However, there are three traits of a great teacher which stand out in my memory of Dr. Vander Meulen above many others which might be mentioned on such an occasion as this.

In the first place, he made the subject which he taught fascinatingly interesting. Partly, he did so by his own manifest interest in the subject, in the students, and in the purpose for which they were studying. Sometimes a teacher, from the very moment at which he comes into the classroom, by his glum facial expression, by his reluctant approach to his desk, by his dog-eared notes, and by everything else that can be observed, predestines and foreordains that the hour shall be dull, and that a state of slumber shall be a constant threat to the minds of the class. Not so, Dr. Vander Meulen. The meeting of a class was for him an *event*—an adventure among facts, theories, and techniques, but also among fancies, imaginations, and possibilities of the future. No fact was so dry but that he could associate it with something interesting. No theory was so abstract that with an illustration he couldn't make it concrete. No technique was so complicated that he couldn't simplify it with an analogy. No fancy, or imagination, was so farfetched but that he could forge the links which would chain it to that which was relevant. For every occasion in the classroom he had a story to tell, and his stories were both interesting and to the point. In fact, the successive meetings of a class in a particular course of his were much like a continued story; they always ended with a climax which left one eager for the next installment.

But if, in the first place, he made his subject interesting to a surpassing degree, in the second place he made his subject vital to his students in terms of life. He expected preaching, on the part of his students, to be well done, and he would not tolerate shoddy preparation. On one occasion, a student wrote a sermon and read it verbatim, when he was expected to preach it extemporaneously or from memory. Moreover, the student had written it so poorly that he couldn't even read his own writing without much repetition, hesitation, and faltering. When the class met later for the criticism of the sermon, Dr. Vander Meulen simply handed him back the manuscript with the devastating comment: "Mr._____, that was

everything that a sermon ought not to be!" Yet, while he could not tolerate shoddy preparation on the part of his students, he never presented the writing or preaching of sermons as a mere academic chore, but rather as a thrilling spiritual adventure with a congregation. A sermon, he taught us, is not simply a mechanically manufactured product, but an artistic creation through the medium of the preacher's own personality. A sermon might involve an array of historical facts, the techniques of painstaking exegesis, of scholarly research, and of logical reasoning, but these techniques must be so creatively integrated in the preacher's own personality that the sermon in its final form is something which has in it life and fire. And he created that ideal of a sermon in the minds of his students, not only by preaching such sermons himself, but also by presenting the subject of Homiletics in the classroom in such a way that Homiletics was not just another academic requirement for graduation, but was rather a warm and integral part of the preacher's life.

Probably Dr. Vander Meulen will be most readily remembered as a teacher for the interestingness of his teaching, but he will be most gratefully remembered, I am sure, for another trait, with the mention of which this tribute must be closed. I have spoken already of his intolerance of shoddy work, and that was characteristic of him as a teacher. That was how he acquired among the students of my day the nickname of "Hardboots"—a nickname of which he has often spoken to me in casual conversation, and a nickname the significance of which he did not at all resent. But along with his devasting judgment on shoddy work was combined an amazing genius for discovering, recognizing, classifying, and nourishing, in the always congenial atmosphere of commendation, the potential talents and gifts for preaching that might be hidden in the personality of the student. All who knew him recognized his surpassing skill for "saying it with flowers" even in the most casual relationships of everyday life. But it was in his relation to students as a teacher of Homiletics that he used "bouquets"

most effectively. It is sometimes a very discouraging experience to make one's first efforts at preaching to a group of critical fellow theologues, and in the presence of a teacher who is a master preacher. And sometimes, when a class has finished with the criticism of a student and his sermon, they are as effectively torn to pieces as a cadaver which has been dissected by a nervous and awkward freshman in medical school. It is a situation to make one despair of ever becoming a preacher. But if a student had worked hard, had honestly tried, and if he had any latent capacity whatsoever, Dr. Vander Meulen would discover it. And as he described it, commended it, and magnified it in terms of its development and possibilities, the student's self-respect, his hopes, and his ambitions would rise, Phoenixlike, out of the ashes of criticism, and he would leave the classroom with renewed aspiration to be a preacher of the unsearchable riches of grace in Christ Jesus.

And this afternoon there are hundreds of his former students of Homiletics, in the North and the South, in the East and the West, who would like, I am sure, to join me in a simple expression of gratitude for the superb skill with which the one, two, or five talents which God had given us were discovered, defined, and developed by Dr. Vander Meulen, the teacher.

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Pastor

The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.

I am to speak to you a word, all too short, about Dr. Vander Meulen as a pastor. A pastor in Bible language is a shepherd. And though we are not a pastoral people, as were the people of Bible times, nevertheless, this figure of a shepherd is one that is very meaningful to us. He was a shepherd. And to this attribute of this many-sided man it is our hearts that respond. When we think of him as a pastor, it is not as with admiration or respect or awe at his power, but with loving and passionate remembrance of what he was to wandering, or bruised, or saddened sheep, such as we all are at times.

Jeremiah speaking for God said: "And I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." A shepherd according to God's heart! He was that. Feeding God's people with knowledge! He did that in his teaching ministry. But most of all, out amid the flock, he was a shepherd of the understanding of God, making God clear in all His gracious offer to care for His own, whatever their need.

Dr. Vander Meulen tended several congregations as their pastor-shepherd. And they all remembered him lovingly, not just for what he said. He was a mighty preacher, but no minister is remembered most for his preaching. He was endeared to every congregation for his shepherding care. At his funeral the congregation which he first served forty years ago lovingly paid their tribute as did the last one he served. He was at his best in sorrow and suffering, in the sickroom and the house of sadness. His pastoral prayers took one to the very foot of the

Cross, and when he prayed for sustaining grace and strength, one could fairly feel the uplift of the Everlasting Arms. His pastoral ministry was never a duty. There was never a time limit that he placed upon it.

There was always a note of gladness about his pastoral work. He loved to meet people and to have them about him. His home was always open to his people. I know that he felt that he received help from them. I recall a characteristic happening when in his New York church he had a young man and his wife in his home for dinner. It was Monday night, and, though the Sunday past was one in which some twenty people had united with the church, it happened that Dr. Vander Meulen, who was also human, was a little blue. He asked the young man to ask the blessing. He had not been long in the church, and his prayer was not couched in well-worn phrases. He prayed for a blessing on the food, and then added: "Dear Lord, cheer up those who are down in the mouth and have no right to be." With a characteristic shout of laughter, Dr. Vander Meulen said: "Your prayer is answered."

The greatest of all shepherds said: "I know my sheep by name." Dr. Vander Meulen was individual in his ministry. He did not think of people in the mass. He ministered to single souls. In this church there was a young business man who used to come to hear him preach. He was regularly one of the crowded congregation, though not a professing Christian. One Sunday he was absent. That week Dr. Vander Meulen met him on Fourth Street and laying his hand on his shoulder, said, "I missed you last Sunday," and passed on. A few weeks later the young man came forward to unite with the church. Dr. Vander Meulen asked him what it was that led him to do it, and he replied: "You remember that day you said that you missed me? Well, I thought that if, in all that crowded church, you noticed that I was not there your messages must have been meant for me."

He remembered the scattered sheep, the young and the old and feeble alike. One of my earliest memories of his pastoral

work is when on a Sunday afternoon years ago, he took a group of us young people out into the country to hold a little service in the farmyard of a couple too old to come to church.

I wish that I might cite the many things I know of him as a pastor, but you could tell me many, many more incidents of his giving of himself in his brooding, shepherding ministry in your need, when days were dark, and burdens heavy, and when his word helped you to lift your head again.

He was most humble about this side of his ministry. He never spoke about it. He always seemed to feel that it was so much less than it ought to be. And, whenever he had a sense of failure, it was here in his pastoral ministry, where he was indeed so strong. One time, not so long ago, we were talking intimately about a minister's pastoral work, how far short he comes of his ideal and how much he leaves undone, and I showed him a poem which helped me and I was sure he would like. As he read it, he spoke of it as being the only sentiment with which he would dare to face his God. And so I give it, as almost his own words, though the words are those of Studdert-Kennedy:

"It is not finished, Lord.
There is not one thing done.
There is no battle of my life,
That I have really won.
And now I come to tell Thee,
How I fought to fail,
My human, all too human, tale
Of weakness and futility.
And yet there is faith in me,
That Thou wilt find in it
One word that Thou canst take
And make
The center of a sentence
In Thy book of poetry.

* * * * *

"I can but hand it in, and hope
That Thy great mind, which reads
The writings of so many lives,
Will understand this scrawl

And what it strives
To say—but leaves unsaid.
I cannot write it over,
The stars are coming out,
My body needs its bed.
I have no strength for more,
So it must stand or fall—Dear Lord—
*That's all."**

But what an infinitely tender and devoted writing he did make as his record of a shepherding care as the pastor of God's flock!

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*From *The Sorrows of God and Other Poems* by G. A. Studdert Kennedy; used by permission of Harper and Brothers, publishers and copyright owners.

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Churchman

The Rev. Horace Cady Wilson, D.D.

I appreciate the privilege of participating in this service and of honoring the memory of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen—a valued churchman of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.

From the year of his ordination, 1896, to the day of his death, June 7, 1936, he rendered through a rich and fruitful ministry a great service to the world.

He held a high place in three great denominations, viz., the Dutch Reformed Church, the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and the Presbyterian Church, U. S. In all three of these denominational groups he was recognized as one of the foremost teachers and preachers of his day.

His varied gifts as a minister so impressed the Church at large that he was given recognition at different times as preacher, teacher, writer, superintendent of Home Missions, and seminary president.

His pulpit power won for him a great following of admirers; and for the cause of Christ many devoted members. His sermons were unusual in subject matter and delivery, and long remembered by those who heard them. He was not only valued by the laity as an effective preacher, but the clergy often secured him as their speaker when they assembled on special occasions.

His services as teacher of Psychology and Pedagogy in Hope College, Michigan, and as professor of Homiletics and Theology in the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, were of great value to those institutions and to the Church at large. The fruit of his labors as a great teacher is evident today in the lives of his students.

As a writer, Dr. Vander Meulen was known throughout the church. His latest book, *The Faith of Christendom,* was published shortly before his death. This exposition of the Apostles' Creed is the last great service given to the world by this highly gifted and able churchman of our day and generation.

Since his death, many of us—his friends—have opened this book and have eagerly read the lectures that give an exhibition of his splendid mind and spirit. The chapters "The Resurrection of the Body" and "The Life Everlasting" are read with an added interest in view of his recent homegoing.

We who had known him through the years as the gifted preacher and teacher little realized that he had such added powers as became manifest while president of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. It has been well said, "He was one whose capacities were unusual in degree and scope of adaptability." During the presidency of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary—1920-1930—both enrollment and endowments were increased; fellowships were established; and additional professors were brought into the faculty. Because Dr. Vander Meulen wished to confine himself more exclusively to teaching and writing, it was with a feeling of sincere regret that the Board of Directors accepted his resignation as president, which became effective in 1930. Continuing then as professor of Doctrinal Theology on the Laird Foundation, he most ably discharged his duty; and with this subject near and dear to his heart, he was looking forward to the completion and publishing of a textbook on theology.

In this brief presentation we have sought to give you some idea of the gifts and service of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, the churchman.

After this life of devoted Christian service and usefulness, he died in the home of friends who had become endeared to him during his Oak Park ministry. Wherever he lived and labored, he won a large following of friends; and I believe in their remembrance of him their hearts are brought together in love and reverence, and with a sympathy that is extended to the wife and son and brother and sisters in their sorrow.

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Friend

The Rev. Jesse L. Cotton, D.D., LL.D.

With all that the former speakers have said about Dr. Vander Meulen, I most heartily agree. It now falls to me to speak on a matter that touches more intimately his personal life. While I have not known him as long as some of you, yet I have known him long enough to discover and feel the warmth of his great loving heart.

One of the greatest blessings we enjoy in this world is that of friends; and no greater benefit can we confer on others than to be a friend to them. Friendship is one of the dearest relations known among men. Friendship is love in action. No portions of the Bible are more interesting and refreshing than those parts which record human friendships. We readily call to mind Ruth and Naomi, Jonathan and David, Paul and the church at Philippi, and, above all, Christ and His disciples, whom He called "friends."

Dr. Vander Meulen was a man who craved friends; and he had a very large circle, not only of acquaintances, but of real friends. He possessed those qualities of mind and heart that readily drew men to him, and they felt the outflow of his love and sympathy for them. His friendship toward others was hallowed and sweetened by the friendship of Christ, for he was truly a friend of God. He was not willing that any student should go out from under his instruction who did not give clear evidence of being a true and sincere friend of the Lord Jesus.

Dr. Vander Meulen was a man of strong likes and dislikes. To those who were his friends he was ever loyal and true. And

those who enjoyed his friendship could not but feel the warmth of his affection. He was never too busy to welcome his friends to his home or to his office. And wherever one might chance to meet him—in his home, in his office, or on the street—his genial smile, his hearty handshake, and his kindly greeting expressed the sincere feeling of his heart. One would leave his presence with a lighter heart and a more joyous and courageous outlook on the task of the day before him.

It was our privilege to have Dr. and Mrs. Vander Meulen, with a few others who were mutual friends, in our home for dinner one evening shortly before his leaving Louisville. We never saw him in a gayer mood. His buoyancy of spirit, his sparkling humor, and his warmheartedness were the delight of all present.

His passing leaves us poorer, sadly poorer; but his host of friends will cherish his memory with peculiar affection, and our every remembrance of him will be inspiring and ennobling.

The following lines express the attitude of our heart toward our dear departed friend:

"Thy presence sweet
Still through long years of vigil I may share,
For if from that enchanted spirit-land
Thy healthful thought into my soul may shine
(E'en though thy voice be still, and cold thy hand),
To lift my life and make it pure as thine,
Then, though thy place on earth a void must be,
Beloved friend, thou art not dead to me."

Dr. Vander Meulen—The Minister of the Second Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Teunis E. Gouwens, D.D.

Dr. Vander Meulen became the minister of the Second Presbyterian Church of our city in 1912, twenty-five years ago. He remained five years. Through the intervening decades, the impression he made upon this congregation has never been forgotten nor has his influence been lost.

My acquaintance with the quality of his work in this field comes from three sources. First, I knew him intimately as teacher, preacher, and friend for seven years before he came here; and I know that the zeal and the effectiveness with which he had labored in other places characterized his work here also. Secondly, in my capacity as his successor in this pulpit and in the whole work of this church, I saw and felt on every hand the abiding results of his ministry. And in the third place, I was informed by various members of this church, and on various occasions, what Dr. Vander Meulen had meant to the members of this congregation.

What I shall say will not be new to you who have been influenced by his ministry. But it will do us all good to review a few of the outstanding features of his work in this portion of the Lord's vineyard.

For one thing, he brought to this church several changes in organization. He soon discovered what seemed to him opportunities to improve the work. Four changes, at least, he made, and the wisdom of these changes is attested by the facts that more effective service was rendered and that through this quarter of a century there was no desire nor effort to return to the

older situations which he found. The four outstanding features of his administrative work are as follows: First, he combined the elders and deacons of the church into a joint session, which has been very effective in directing and performing the work of the church. Secondly, he took the four groups of woman's work, the Foreign Mission Group, the Home Mission Group, the King's Daughters, and the Pastor's Aid, and combined them into one unit called the Woman's Organization. Thirdly, he organized the Men's Class. And fourthly, he started the Christian Endeavor work of our church.

Had not his work as pastor been so adequately discussed by a former speaker, I would be tempted to dwell at length on the way in which our departed friend went in and out among the members of his flock, giving cheer, comfort, and strength to the distressed and blessing the homes that loved his presence.

One of his favorite sermons of later years was based on the theme "He Feedeth His Flock among the Lilies." He knew how to enter the lives of people. He knew how to weep with them that weep and how to rejoice with them that rejoice.

But perhaps his chief contribution to this church was through the pulpit. He was one of the outstanding preachers of his generation. Today his voice is stilled, but the memory of it and the message it brought will abide.

His preaching was the result of hard and consistent study. He was a tireless reader, and the books he read were the best books published. Depth and difficulty did not frighten him. If a philosopher or psychologist or scientist or historian had something worth while to say, Dr. Vander Meulen could understand his language and in simple words reproduce his thought. He enjoyed a thorough familiarity with the methods and results of historical and Biblical criticism but he retained his gospel. Some men are good critics; others are good speakers. Dr. Vander Meulen was both.

He knew the value of retaining the old camping grounds of truth and conviction; he knew also the value of venturing forth in the realm of thought and of making new explorations. More

than twenty-five years ago I heard him preach a sermon on the text, "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd." The nails are to hold us to the past, and goads are to prod us into the future.

And when some duty was to be performed or when some peril threatened, he could sound forth a clarion call which stirred the hearts of his hearers. He experienced again and again the joy of having his people respond to his pulpit appeals, appeals for loyalty to the ideals of Christ. If, as Ruskin says, a sermon provides "thirty minutes to raise the dead," he knew how to use that half hour. Many years ago I heard an elderly professor say of him, "He always strikes twelve. Other men do so once in a while, but he always does it."

Always interesting, always clear, always logical, and always forceful, he was a great preacher. But he was mightiest in the pulpit when the passion of his soul shone through his eyes and poured out new life through his words. He had a heart that could feel. One of his favorite characters in literature was Greatheart in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.* And like Hawthorne's man of the mountain who at last resembled the Great Stone Face, so all men tend to become like the characters they admire. When men and women needed help, it was with genuine sympathy that Dr. Vander Meulen hastened to their relief. And that concern for human hearts was evident in his sermons. Dr. George A. Gordon said of one church that, in estimating the fitness of a minister for its pulpit, it asked this question: "Does your preaching enlighten and help us in the great struggle of life?" That test our departed friend met in generous measure.

With splendid courage and zeal he proclaimed the word to his generation and now he has passed on the torch. One of his friends, also recently gone to his reward, was Dr. A. T. Robertson. Dr. Robertson has a book entitled *Passing on the Torch,* and the opening chapter is based on this text: "For which reason I am reminding thee to keep blazing the gift of God. . . .

Deposit these with reliable men who will be able to teach others, also." Dr. Vander Meulen kept the torch blazing in his own day and, meanwhile, he was passing it on to younger men. And now his own son, having decided to enter the ministry, will pick up that torch and let it blaze anew, as he follows in the succession of his father, and his father's fathers. Like a wise son he will bring joy to the heart of his mother and fulfillment to the desire of his father.

As members of the Second Presbyterian Church, we praise the Lord today for the contribution he made to the church we love and for the influence he exerted on our lives.

Elberon Memorial Church

ELBERON, NEW JERSEY

FOR A period of about twelve years, Dr. Vander Meulen was the summer pastor for the Elberon Memorial Church, in Elberon, New Jersey. This being a summer resort, the church services for the season would begin about the last week in June and continue through the first or second Sunday in September. The hour of the morning service was eleven o'clock. At four o'clock each Sunday afternoon a vesper service was held.

Among the things which thrilled Dr. Vander Meulen's heart, Sunday after Sunday, was the music of his choir, under the direction of Mr. Robert Gayler. They sang the great hymns and anthems in a soul-stirring way and many of these Dr. Vander Meulen would have repeated time and again. At least once a month the vesper service was strictly musical.

In loving remembrance, therefore, when planning the joint memorial service for Dr. Vander Meulen and Dr. S. Parkes Cadman—onetime pastor of the Elberon Church—a vesper service was chosen and it was strictly musical, the choir and accompanists singing and playing the hymns, anthems, and instrumental numbers, which both these men loved.

Elberon Memorial Church

(The Moses Taylor Memorial)

PARK AVENUE

ELBERON, NEW JERSEY

THE REV. JOHN E. KUIZENGA, D.D.

Stuart Professor of Apologetics and Christian Ethics

Princeton Theological Seminary

PREACHER

✠

THE CHOIR

MRS. MARIE STODDART GAYLER . . . *Soprano*

MISS ELSIE BAKER . . . . . *Contralto*

MR. NORMAN HORN . . . . . *Tenor*

MR. WILLIAM TUCKER . . . . . *Basso*

MISS NANCY MORGAN . . . . . *Harpiste*

MISS JOAN FIELD . . . . . *Violiniste*

MR. ROBERT GAYLER, *Director*

✠

Lord's Day, July 19

Nineteen Hundred Thirty-six

Vesper Service

4 o'clock

A Service of Remembrance

Dr. John M. Vander Meulen
Dr. S. Parkes Cadman

Prelude—"Ave Maria" . . . . . *Schubert-Wilhelmj*

"Largo, New World Symphony" . . . . . *Dvorak*

(for violin, harp, and organ)

Invocation

Hymn No. 525—"Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand" . . *Dykes*

The Reading of the Holy Scripture

Anthem—"Ho! Every One That Thirsteth" . . . . *Macfarlane*

Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? harken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. I heard the voice of Jesus say, Behold I freely give the living water; thirsty one, stoop down and drink and live. I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream; my thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in Him.

Anthem—"Night Hymn at Sea" . . . . . *Goring-Thomas*

Night sinks on the wave, hollow gusts are sighing, seabirds to their cave thro' the gloom are flying. Oh! should storms come sweeping, Thou, in Heaven unsleeping, o'er Thy children vigil keeping, hear and save. Stars look o'er the the sea, few and sad and shrouded, Faith, our light must be, when all else is clouded. Thou, whose voice came thrilling, wind and billow stilling, speed once more, Thy prayer fulfilling, Power dwells with Thee.

Anthem—"Watchman! What of the Night" . . . . . *Sarjeant*

Say, watchman, what of the night?
Do the dews of the morning fall?
Have the orient skies a border of light,
Like the fringe of a funeral pall?

The night is fast waning on high;
And soon shall the darkness flee,
And the morn shall spread o'er the blushing sky,
And bright shall its glories be.

But, watchman, what of the night,
When sorrow and pain are mine,
And the pleasures of life, so sweet and bright,
No longer around me shine?

That night of sorrow thy soul
May surely prepare to meet,
But away shall the clouds of thy heaviness roll,
And the morning of joy shall be sweet.

But, watchman, what of the night,
When the arrow of death is sped,
And the grave, which no glimmering star can light,
Shall be my sleeping bed?

That night is near and the cheerless tomb
Shall keep thy body in store,
Till the morn of eternity rise on the gloom,
And night shall be no more!

ANTHEM—"Tomorrow Comes the Song" . . . . . *Ambrose*

Be strong! We are not here to play, to dream, to drift; we have hard work to do and loads to lift. Shun not the struggle, face it, 'tis God's gift. Be strong! say not the days are evil, who's to blame? and fold the hands and acquiesce, O shame! Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name. Be strong! it matters not how deep intrenched the wrong, how hard the battle goes, the day, how long; Faint not, fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

ANTHEM—"Hark! Hark! My Soul" . . . . . *Shelley*

OFFERTORY—"When They Ring the Golden Bells" . . *DeMarbelle*

There's a land beyond the river, that we call the sweet forever, and we only reach the shore by faith's decree; one by one we'll gain the portals, there to dwell with the immortals, when they ring the golden bells for you and me. Don't you hear the bells now ringing? don't you hear the angels singing? 'Tis the glory hallelujah Jubilee, in that far-off sweet forever, just beyond the shining river, when they ring the golden bells for you and me.

We shall know no sin nor sorrow, in that haven of tomorrow, when our barque shall sail beyond the silver sea; we shall only know the blessing of our Father's sweet caressing, when they ring the golden bells for you and me.

When our days shall know their number, when in death we sweetly slumber, when the King commands the spirit to be free; nevermore with anguish laden, we shall reach that lovely aiden, when they ring the golden bells for you and me.

HYMN No. 520—

BENEDICTION

SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE—"Deep River" . . . . . *Negro Spiritual*

(FOR VIOLIN, HARP, AND ORGAN)

Louisville Presbytery

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U. S.

THE regular summer meeting of Louisville Presbytery, Presbyterian Church, U. S., was held in the Portland Avenue Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky, Tuesday, July 21, 1936.

Following the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Presbytery engaged in a Memorial Service for the Rev. John M. Vander Meulen, D.D., LL.D., whose death occurred June 7, 1936. The order of the service, conducted by Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D., pastor of the Highland Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky, was as follows:

HYMN—"Hark! Hark, My Soul"

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS

PRAYER

HYMN—"Jerusalem the Golden"

BENEDICTION

Memorial

TO

THE REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D.D., LL.D.

THE PRESBYTERY OF LOUISVILLE wishes to spend these few moments in a sincere memorial to the memory of John M. Vander Meulen, a friend and outstanding leader among us for twenty-four years.

Dr. Vander Meulen was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on April 12, 1870. He was a graduate of Hope College, Holland, Michigan, and the McCormick Theological Seminary of Chicago, having previously studied for two years at Princeton Theological Seminary. His early ministry was spent in the Reformed Church of America, as was that of his father and grandfather before him. He was married in 1905 to Mary M. Venneklasen, of Zeeland, Michigan. Their one son, John M., Jr., was born in 1914.

Dr. Vander Meulen served the Second Reformed Church of Kalamazoo, Michigan, as his first pastorate. He then served the First Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Following two years as missionary in Oklahoma of the Domestic Missions Board, he became professor at Hope College, teaching Psychology. During this time of his professorship he served as pastor of Hope Church. In 1909 he served as pastor of the Hamilton Grange Reformed Church, New York City, and in 1912 came to Louisville as the pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church. After five years of brilliant and exceptionally useful service in this church he accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Oak Park, Illinois. After three years of service there, he yielded to the call of the Louisville Theological Seminary to become its President, and later to take

the chair of Doctrinal Theology, which position he held until his death on June 7, 1936. He was laid to rest in the Pilgrim Home Cemetery at Holland, Michigan, on Wednesday, June 10, 1936.

Dr. Vander Meulen's service was always unusual in every phase of a remarkable ministry. He was outstanding as an organizer, an administrator, a churchman, a teacher, a preacher, a pastor, and a friend. His scholarship, his clearness of thought, his depth of sympathy, his soundness of theological conviction, and his evangelical passion combined to give him a powerful influence wherever his broad Christian ministry reached.

As ministers of this presbytery we bear testimony to his inspiration and deep influence among us. His was the rare gift of preaching with power not only, but also of transmitting a passion to preach to every struggling minister whose privilege it was to hear him. As a presbytery we feel a keen sense of loss, but are grateful to the Eternal Father who endowed him so wonderfully, and who gave us the privilege of being associated in a humble way with him in the ministry of our Lord.

Be it resolved that a copy of this memorial be spread upon the minutes of presbytery and a copy be sent to the bereaved family.

PRESBYTERY OF LOUISVILLE:

By P. H. PLEUNE,
T. E. GOUWENS.

Louisville Presbyterian Seminary

The Opening

SEPTEMBER 30, 1936

10:00 A. M.

PRELUDE—*"The War March of the Priests . . Mendelssohn*

Robert Veazey, Organist.

DOXOLOGY

INVOCATION

Dean Lewis J. Sherrill, Ph.D., D.D.

WELCOME

President Frank H. Caldwell, Ph.D., D.D.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN NO. 341—*"In Christ There Is No East Nor West"*

Memorial Service

THE REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D.D., LL.D.
1870-1936

President, 1920-1930

Professor of Doctrinal Theology, 1930-1936

"A Counselor of Youth"
President Frank H. Caldwell, Ph.D., D.D.

Scripture Reading (*II Timothy 3:14—4:8*)
The Rev. Peter H. Pleune, D.D.

Prayer
Professor Andrew K. Rule, Ph.D.

"A Teacher of Theology"
The Rev. George T. Hubbard

"A Prince of Preachers"
Professor W. D. Chamberlain, Ph.D., D.D.

"A Seminary President"
Professor C. H. Pratt, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.

Hymn No. 431—*"Hark! Hark, My Soul"*

Benediction
Professor Julian Price Love, Ph.D., D.D.

Postlude—*"March Pontifical"* . . . . . *Lemmens*

Service held in
Harbison Memorial Chapel

Dr. Vander Meulen—A Counselor of Youth

President Frank H. Caldwell, Ph.D., D.D.

AT THIS POINT on the opening day of a new school year, we pause to honor the memory of a genius whose versatility affords ample material for much thought and many addresses. At a previous service held at the Second Presbyterian Church in June, addresses were made on Dr. Vander Meulen as a theologian, as a pastor, as a teacher of homiletics, as a friend, as an ecclesiastical statesman, and as a pastor of Second Church. Today we are to speak of other aspects of the life of this man of so many talents.

Others are to tell of him as a teacher of theology, as a master of the art of preaching, and as a president of this seminary. I speak of him as a counselor of youth.

He was always a busy man, but when he was aware that his counsel was needed, he gave wholeheartedly of his time, his attention, and his keen analytical powers to those who sought him. I came to know *of* him first as a preacher, but I came to *know* him first as a counselor. One morning, when I was a student at the University of Mississippi, a man of whom I had never heard preached a sermon in the chapel on "The Voice in the Wilderness." It was in the fall of the year, and though he had made no direct appeal to the students of the university to consider the ministry, the indirect but powerfully suggestive impact of that sermon lingered in my memory all winter as I wrestled with that typically baffling question of college youth—What shall I do with my life? Spring came, and the question was still unsettled, when one day just on the eve of examina-

tions I learned that the same Dr. Vander Meulen who, in the fall, had fired my imagination with his vividly dramatic portrayal of John the Baptist as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," was to speak at a banquet that evening in a town thirty miles away. I felt that I sorely needed that man's counsel, but if I went to that neighboring town that night, I must run a double risk—the risk of finding him too busy to give me any time, and the risk of failing an examination next morning for which I needed to study. I ran both risks, and arriving at the appointed place just a few minutes before the banquet was to begin, timidly and almost hopelessly I inquired of him whether it would be possible at some time during the evening for us to have a talk. And as if the banquet didn't really matter at all, he said, "Yes, we can talk right now." We went outside and sat in somebody's parked automobile. I raised the questions with which I had been wrestling all winter. Calmly, sympathetically, clearly, he made his answers, and before we got out of that car to go to the banquet I had made the decision to enter seminary that fall to prepare for the ministry.

Nor was that the last occasion on which he meant much to me as a counselor. There were more such occasions than time will permit me to mention. But if that incident stands out as an example of his willingness to give graciously of his time and analytical powers, there is one other incident which I would relate more briefly to show another side of his counseling of youth.

He had been corresponding with me about coming to the faculty in the Seminary. It was not an easy question to decide, for I loved the pastorate, and there were many perplexing factors involved. Mere correspondence about them did not seem to promise a solution of the difficulties. Finally, he graciously arranged to meet me in Memphis. We had talked for about five hours and seemed no nearer a conclusion as to what ought to be done, when he suggested that we pray. I prayed, but my words seemed as sounding brass. Then he prayed, and the light began to dawn which finally showed the way to a decision that

brought peace and poise. And for that prayer of this counselor of youth—prayer made as we knelt together on the floor of that hotel room in Memphis—I shall always be grateful.

Perhaps these instances of his counseling are unusual. Possibly they are quite typical and could be paralleled by the testimonies of many other youths who have taken counsel with him. At any rate, these were mountaintop experiences in the life of one youth, and for them I would honor his memory today.

A Prayer

PROFESSOR ANDREW K. RULE, Ph.D.
Departments of Apologetics and Church History

ALMIGHTY GOD, who art a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable, we come into Thy presence with adoring gratitude, because of Thy marvelously gracious purpose to redeem our fallen humanity, and because of the redeeming grace which has already been so freely granted to us.

We thank Thee for Him whose glory we have beheld, full of grace and truth; for His life on earth that sets the perfect pattern of purity, and holiness, and loving service; for His death in our stead upon the accursed tree; and for His risen power in which He is making all things to work together for the good of those who love Him.

We bless Thee for the glorious company of those whose hearts Thou hast touched, and who have through all the ages witnessed to men—and to us—of the deity of Thy Son, and His power and purpose to bring us to fullness of life here and in the world to come. For the great privilege of fellowship with some of them in this life do we bless Thee, and for our continued fellowship with the saints, immortal, who now serve in Thy immediate presence.

We are grateful to Thee for the blessing that came into our lives through such fellowship with Thy servant, Dr. Vander Meulen, and for the spirit of brotherhood which we feel for many people in all walks of life who are one with us because they too have shared that blessing. May the mantle of this great Elijah fall upon us, that we may live richly in the king-

dom of God and so proclaim the glorious gospel that sinners may be converted unto Thee and the saints built up in Thee.

Graciously bless, we beseech Thee, the lovely lady who walked by his side through life and must now walk alone. May she learn more and more to say, with her Saviour, "And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me." And pour out Thy grace upon their son, that he may not merely walk in his father's footsteps but stand upon his shoulders.

Make Thy face to shine upon this School of the Prophets as we seek to rally the broken ranks and to carry further the service unto which Thou hast called us. Help us all increasingly to understand and to live the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints, that there may go forth from this beloved spot streams of influence that shall regenerate the world until the time shall come when man shall no longer say to his brother, "Know the Lord," for all shall know Thee.

We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Dr. Vander Meulen—A Teacher of Theology

The Rev. George T. Hubbard, Graduate of 1936
Pastor, Presbyterian Church, Petersburg, Indiana

During the period in which Dr. Vander Meulen was connected with this seminary, he held several positions. Each of these was capably filled by him. In 1930 he was elected to the professorship of Doctrinal Theology on the Laird Foundation. He served the Seminary well in this capacity. Each position which Dr. Vander Meulen held was one of importance and responsibility. This last one was none the less important. Throughout this period from 1930 to the end of the last seminary year, Dr. Vander Meulen fulfilled his duties in an admirable manner. He seemed to feel that he was not responsible to any one person or group but owed his allegiance to several different groups.

First of all, Dr. Vander Meulen displayed a supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ, his Saviour. He always sought to magnify the person and work of Christ. He had little or no patience with those who sought to detract from the life and work of Christ. Upon every occasion, Dr. Vander Meulen was ready to champion the cause of Christ and righteousness. He never failed to speak a word for his Lord and Master when opportunity allowed. It was his earnest endeavor to make Christ a living Person in the life of the individual student.

Next, Dr. Vander Meulen felt that he owed a loyalty to the Church which Jesus had planned should continue the gospel message among men. In this, he was not so interested in minute details, except the important ones, as he was in the great fundamental truths accepted by Christians as a whole. This gave to the student a broad vision rather than a narrow and bigoted one.

Being a member of the faculty it was only natural that loyalty was developed toward this institution and its policies. It was ever his aim to do his part in making this an outstanding place of learning in its field. He presented his courses in such a manner that they were in harmony with the other courses of the curriculum. In fact, he felt that theology was the foundation course of the others. When some student would present another professor's idea which did not seem to agree with Dr. Vander Meulen's he would condemn neither the professor nor the idea. He would endeavor, instead, to show that the two opinions were not so opposed as it might appear. Even though the differences could not be harmonized, he would remain friendly and tolerant when others would not.

In all of his courses Dr. Vander Meulen tried to guide the student in formulating his own theology. The theological truths that were fundamental he presented in a most interesting manner. He was capable of doing this because of his wide knowledge and varied experience. He drew upon these sources for his apt and usable illustrations. This showed to the student how to make theology interesting to others and impressed upon him the fact that theology can be preached.

In the classroom, Dr. Vander Meulen displayed those qualities necessary for a good theologian. He had a well-disciplined mind. Never did he feel that he had the final word on any of the great problems of theology. Some of these he felt would only be answered when he met his Master face to face. Other great spiritual truths he accepted by faith, feeling that the truths themselves were better than the solutions found through reasoning. His acquaintance with the sciences enabled him to make the classroom discussion very interesting. His knowledge of the original languages of the Scriptures enabled him to explain the difficult passages in their relation to theology. One of the outstanding characteristics of Dr. Vander Meulen was his affection toward God. One could always sense his holy attitude and reverence toward the Heavenly Father, both in the classroom and out of it, whether he be engaged in a discussion, lecture, or private conversation. Neander had a motto

that Dr. Vander Meulen accepted for his own. That motto was *"Pectus est quod theologum facit"*—"It is the heart that makes the theologian." Dr. Vander Meulen impressed this motto upon each student and suggested that he be guided by it. The Holy Spirit enlightened Dr. Vander Meulen as a teacher of theology and enriched his influence upon those who had the privilege of sitting in his classes.

Dr. Vander Meulen had a deep interest in each of his students. This interest went beyond the contact in the classroom and developed into a personal fellowship of a lasting nature. No work of this length can possibly reveal all of the good Dr. Vander Meulen did. That good will live after him in the lives of those who knew him. He was strict yet sympathetic toward the student and tried to understand the student's problems and point of view. He was strong in his convictions, yet tolerant. He commanded the respect of every student. His jovial manner was characteristic when he enjoyed good health. That same dramatic ability which was so noticeable in his preaching was often seen in his lectures. No one could come in contact with Dr. Vander Meulen as a teacher without realizing that he was a man of God who sought to lead his students to a deep, spiritual, and personal knowledge of God and His universe. This knowledge he sought to make lasting as he considered it the vital power to equip the student for a true ministry.

Dr. Vander Meulen—A Prince of Preachers

PROFESSOR W. D. CHAMBERLAIN, Ph.D., D.D.
Department of New Testament Exegesis

BY EVERY standard of measurement Dr. Vander Meulen was a prince among preachers. Various men, who were themselves generally regarded as great preachers, have placed him among the five or six great preachers of America.

It is impossible to describe his pulpit work so as to do him justice. One must have heard him, at his best, to properly appreciate him. There was something about his preaching that swept his hearers along with him. He was a genius, but interwoven with his genius were years of unremitting toil.

Among the many striking excellencies of Dr. Vander Meulen's preaching, two stood out conspicuously:

1. He Was a Scholarly Preacher.

This reference to scholarship should not raise a cloud of dust in your eyes, for there was no dry-as-dust scholarship about him. His was a scintillating scholarship. He was a man of very diverse learning, due to the fact that he had been a voracious reader all of his life. He read in many fields and read discriminatingly. His homiletic eye was ever alert to the sermonic possibilities of all that he read.

While he read almost every type of literature, the backbone of his reading consisted of the solid, worth-while books. While still in the pastorate, he kept abreast of the most significant theological and critical thought-currents of the time. This can be seen by thumbing through the books of his library and noting the marginal annotations made as he read. It was this habit of reading that kept his capacities growing over the years. It was an alert, well-stored mind that enabled him to captivate outstanding professional and business leaders. The diversity

of his learning enabled him to achieve remarkable variety. He studied the art of variety both as to content and approach to his theme. When a pastor, he sought to keep a balance between the philosophical, the poetical, the practical, the evangelistic, and the missionary emphases. This varied menu no doubt added much to the charm of his discourse. His preaching stimulated the minds of men and warmed their hearts and bound their affections firmly to him and to his Saviour. He was particularly fond of the classics, but any and every type of literature was used to illustrate his point.

His scholarship was simple. He had a very unusual ability to take an involved subject, sort out its essential features and rearrange them so as to make them clear to the uninitiated. This he did with that vexed New Testament question, the Johannine problem. He delivered a lecture on this subject before several ministerial groups, both to their delight and their enlightenment. The "head-cracking" theology of Karl Barth, he analyzed and simplified until he could make it plain to a group of amateur theologians. This gift of simplification continually revealed itself in his preaching. Not only did the scholar, the professional man, and the big executive enjoy his preaching, but also the children of his congregation hung on his words. More than one story is told of small boys who lamented that they could not go to sleep while Dr. Vander Meulen was preaching, lest they miss something that he said.

He could dramatize scholarship. He was often compared to David Warfield in his dramatic power, and many thought that he bore a rather close physical resemblance to him. He drew easily and readily, from all of his wide reading, stories, incidents, and ideas which he dramatized with great effectiveness. I can never forget a sermon which he preached at Trinity University some ten years ago. He came there, while I was a member of the faculty, for a week of evangelistic services. In this particular sermon he was urging the college students to develop all of their potentialities, because they never could know when some emergency of life would demand the use of them. His point was that if they had been developed, one

would triumph; if they had been neglected, one would go down in defeat. To illustrate his point, he drew upon Ben Hur. He told how the Jewish boy in the Roman galley asked that he might be chained to the other side of the galley, so that, rowing from that side, he might develop his left arm as well as his right. Later, when the young Jew had been released and was privileged to drive in the thundering chariot race, it was the strength of that left arm that enabled him to control his charging horses and avoid piling up in the crash, when horseflesh and broken men and chariot wheels, all, rolled in a tangled mass. His dramatization of the chariot race electrified the six hundred students present. But never once in this dramatic portrayal did he let them lose sight of the point being illustrated—the challenge to the complete development of one's potentialities.

This was not his first visit to this Texas college town. When it was reported that Dr. Vander Meulen was coming again, the whole town, as well as the college, began to talk of him. I discovered that the town had a favorite sermon. So many requests came for him to preach that sermon again that he yielded, and to their delight preached again, "He Feedeth His Flock Among the Lilies."

I always thought that Dr. Vander Meulen was at his best when preaching to a college group. He loved young people and drew them to him. But his brother ministers also found his preaching stimulating, instructive, and satisfying. Some eight years ago, I spent the summer in New Jersey, not so many miles from Elberon, where he had a summer pastorate. Not only did the big business leaders and professional men of New York come to hear him, but I found that it was the custom for the ministers, in that whole part of the state, to go to his afternoon services. He was regarded by them as a preacher *par excellence.*

2. He Was a Preacher with a Burning Heart.

It is true that Dr. Vander Meulen knew books, but he also knew men. He knew human life and thought, and knowing this,

he knew human need. He lived his whole ministry under the conviction that he had the answer to the deepest needs of human life. He believed with all his soul that this answer was Jesus Christ. With all the passion of his great heart, he sought to bring Christ and human need together.

He was conscious of sin and its ravages in human personality. With great power he preached of sin and he always called it by its own name. Whitewash had no place among his homiletic materials. His cast of thought on sin was essentially Pauline, Augustinian, Calvinistic. It was sin that nailed the Master to the tree. But, somehow, that act of extreme enormity had dealt a deathblow to sin itself. In the crucified One, sin was forever put to rout. It was the good news that sin had lost its conquest over men that he proclaimed through a long ministry. He yearned to make this message real to every class and condition of humanity that all might find abundant life in Him. He went as readily to the small church in the countryside as to the great city church.

Right at the forefront of his consciousness was his own sense of sin and the need of the grace of Christ. He frequently talked in a simple and unaffected way of these things with his intimate friends. It was this consciousness of sin and the experience of forgiveness that gave him the "burning heart." He had great sympathy for those who struggled with any besetting sin, and was a gentle and wise counselor. He was inclined to regard the sins of the body as less heinous than the sins of the spirit. Pride, self-satisfaction, underhandedness, and dishonesty were particularly distasteful to him. The flames that kept his heart aglow were gratitude and love toward his Saviour. The joy of finding something adequate for his own profoundest needs made him eager to pass the healing experience on to others.

Dr. Vander Meulen's own recipe for the "burning heart" is threefold.

> "The first is great brooding. The birth of a great passion is like the birth of all living things. It must be hatched out, if I may use so homely a term. It must be nourished in silence apart from the haunts and fellowship of men."

Those who knew Dr. Vander Meulen are aware of how he met God in the secret place. The second way that he suggests to attain the burning heart is through contagion from a great personality.

> "A Joshua catches fire from a Moses, an Elisha from an Elijah, an Augustine from an Ambrose, and many a man from his mother or some other unformed but burning soul. And the second blaze is always different from the first, and sometimes less, but sometimes also more."

But the heart of the matter, he found in the third way—

> " . . . communion with the risen Christ. That is where Paul got it; that is where Thomas Chalmers and John Henry Jowett got it. That is where all the greatest preachers of the world found it. The great secret of passionate preaching is when one's own brooding meets the contagious personality of the risen Lord."

I do not feel that I should close this brief view of Dr. Vander Meulen as a preacher without referring to his follow-up work. He was a great letter writer. Often, after he had left a place, he wanted to clinch some impression or ripen some impulse into a decision, or to express appreciation for some kindness, so he wrote a letter. These letters were always gems. After he left the Texas college to which I referred, it was not uncommon for some student to say, "I had a letter from Dr. Vander Meulen today!" Some of his letters to me over the years are among my most prized possessions. His preaching was always forceful and winning, but he often carried its influence on by letter.

In his preaching, as in his life, he was always courageous and straightforward.

> *"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,*
> *Never doubted clouds would break,*
> *Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,*
> *Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,*
> *Sleep to wake."*

Truly a prince and a great man has fallen among us, and preeminently a prince of preachers. Of course it is a sorrow that he has gone from us, but the joy to have known him, to have heard him, and to have worked with him, is even greater than the sorrow at his going. He has fallen to rise again and labor there as here.

Dr. Vander Meulen—A Seminary President

PROF. CHARLES H. PRATT, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D.
Department of Missions and Evangelism

DR. VANDER MEULEN came to this seminary in the year 1920 after the earnest solicitation of a great many people continuing over a period of two years. He was pastor, at the time of his call to the presidency of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, of the large and influential church at Oak Park, Illinois.

He was president of the Seminary from 1920 to 1930. It was the postwar period and a most trying time. The fortunes of the Seminary were at very low ebb. The student body numbered thirty-four. One whole wing of the Seminary was rented out for transients. At his retirement in 1930 the student body was ninety-six and had been as high as one hundred and six.

When Dr. Vander Meulen came there were only four full professors: Dr. Hemphill, Dr. Dosker, Dr. Cotton, and Dr. McAllister, and two instructors. Three new chairs were added to the Seminary by Dr. Vander Meulen: those of Homiletics, Religious Education, and Missions and Evangelism. The faculty came to number eight full professors and two instructors. All of the present members of the faculty were brought into the Seminary under him. In every case they were selected after long search and much prayer, and were thought of as being the best men available in the country.

Two lectureships were established during his presidency, one in Archaeology with the splendid collection on Palestine; and the other, the lectureship in Religious Education.

When Dr. Vander Meulen came to the Seminary there were no fellowships. He secured six: The Walter Kennedy Patter-

son Fellowship in Greek New Testament, the Edward P. Humphrey Fellowship for general scholarship and leadership and promise of usefulness, the Henry E. Dosker Fellowship in Church History, the Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Anderson Fellowship in Religious Education, the Fielding Lewis Walker Fellowship in Doctrinal Theology, and the Helm Bruce Fellowship in English Bible.

During the years 1920-1930 there was added to the endowments of the Seminary some $690,000.00, which has now become still more because of the death of some of those who were still living and whose endowments have since been paid in full.

There were four synods controlling the Seminary when Dr. Vander Meulen came: the synods of Kentucky, U. S. and U. S. A., Missouri, and Appalachia. To these have been added Alabama and Tennessee, U. S.

In addition a new site of twenty acres fronting on Louisville's new and lovely Seneca Park was given the Seminary and a married students' dormitory, Bingham Hall, largely the gift of Hon. Robert W. Bingham.

In that period, too, the standards for entrance and graduation have been raised several times, and the curriculum has been thoroughly revised so that our seminary stands near the head of theological institutions in the nation in such matters.

Perhaps the most difficult task for any minister in such a position is in enlisting friends and securing money with which to operate the institution. In that matter Dr. Vander Meulen was little short of a genius. People came to him voluntarily to give money. Or when he approached them it seemed the natural thing to intrust him with money for the Seminary. Again in the internal affairs of the Seminary his relations with all members of the faculty were the free, happy, and informal kind. He believed in the freest and fullest consultation with the faculty on all matters. He was himself so full of humility that he never condescended. Good will and love marked all his relationships. He was likewise the indefatigable worker. Whether by letter

or personal solicitation or visits to colleges and Church courts, the Seminary was always on his heart and before the public.

Such a bare outline is his record. I doubt if there is a parallel to it in any other theological seminary in the country during these years. Heaven is richer and gayer for his being there. He strongly believed in the communion of the saints and is with us today in fellowship.

For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might;
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true light.

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—Alleluia.

Memorials

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Memorial

From the Bulletin of

CENTRAL REFORMED CHURCH, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

(*Pastorate 1899-1901*)

THE sudden death of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen removed from the Church of Christ one of the most able preachers of our day. A man of dramatic eloquence, with keen insight into the interpretation of the Scriptures, with large experience of the grace of God in his own heart, thoroughly consecrated to the service of the Master, he made the sermon, indeed the whole service, a banquet and a feast for the congregation. Dramatic, humorous, glowing, dynamic, he was a crusader for Christ. Whether in the pulpit, behind the teaching desk, in the administrative chair, at the bedside of the dying, in the fellowship of friends or in a company of strangers, he had the rare gift of adaptation that made men recognize in him not only an orator, a scholar, a teacher, a preacher, a theologian, but above all a man of God always exemplifying in his life the Christlike spirit.

As a church we feel a keen sense of loss. Some of us have known him as our pastor, some as our professor, and how inspired we all were by his wonderful messages delivered in our church last December. (1935.) That was a spiritual feast that we shall never forget. Though departed from us he shall continue to speak to us. We praise God for him and ask the Holy Spirit's comforting grace for his bereaved family.

An Expression of Sympathy

by the

CONSISTORY OF THE HAMILTON GRANGE REFORMED CHURCH
NEW YORK CITY

(*Pastorate 1909-1912*)

NEW YORK, N. Y.,
June 28, 1936.

MRS. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN,
Louisville, Kentucky.

Dear Mrs. Vander Meulen:

The Consistory of the Hamilton Grange Reformed Church of New York City has instructed me to convey to you and to your son its deep sympathy upon the recent death of your beloved and distinguished husband.

Dr. Vander Meulen's brief ministry here many years ago left a deep and abiding impression upon this church. It is true that only a few now remain of those who knew him, but they cherish his memory, and recall with gratitude his scholarly attainments, his gifted preaching, his devotion to the great cause, and his ever friendly spirit. After leaving here, as we all know, he entered upon wider spheres of usefulness and influence; and it is a great loss which the whole Church has suffered in his departure.

In your personal sorrow, his and your friends here desire to share.

Very sincerely yours,

PHILIP J. THOMPSON,
Clerk of Consistory.

Resolution

Adopted by

THE SESSION OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

(Pastorate 1912-1917)

IN THE death of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, a former pastor of this church, we have lost one of the most popular and well-beloved ministers that ever came among us.

With his wonderful oratorical ability, sincerity, and unshaken belief in the teachings of Christ, his words found place in the hearts of his hearers and brought peace of mind and happiness to many.

Through his great executive ability and untiring efforts the Presbyterian Theological Seminary gained support that placed it among the leading religious institutions of the country. In the classroom, in the pulpit, in his conversation and daily life, he earnestly taught that a triumphant life depended entirely upon belief in Christ. It was this great faith that gave him power and aroused in his friends such loyal devotion.

To Mrs. Vander Meulen and John we extend our deepest sympathy, fully realizing, however, that their greatest comfort is in the knowledge that eternal happiness is his reward.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be spread upon the records of the church and a copy sent to the family.

PHILIP F. BARBOUR, *Chairman,*

STUART E. DUNCAN, A. CLAYTON MCCARTY,
CHESTER A. RANKIN, NICHOLAS H. DOSKER,
WILLIAM R. ATKINS, CHARLES B. CASTNER,
THOMAS A. BARKER.

Resolution

Adopted by

THE WOMAN'S AUXILIARY OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

(*Read on June 9, 1936, at the regular meeting*)

LATE in the afternoon of a Sabbath day, Dr. Vander Meulen was called Home—and to rest. He was not in his earthly home at the time, but visiting old friends, and was ministered to by loving hands in another city.

His work in our midst was finished, but the result of those years between 1912 and 1936 cannot be estimated by our finite recordings. His gifts were many. He was brilliant and kindly, witty and intellectual, strong and understanding, wise and sympathetic.

To us of the Auxiliary he had given much. When he left the Second Church pastorate in 1917, he had remarked to the members, "I have given you the best five years of my life." He organized the woman's work as it had never been correlated before, and felt the "Organization" was distinctively a large part of his service to the Second Church. His good fellowship was always in evidence to us, his friends—but never did he fail in his counseling and conversation, to exalt the name of the Saviour, Jesus, his Friend.

We will always cherish the memory of one of his last informal talks to us when he gave us the real meaning of "Stewardship"—the strength and beauty of which he had learned and practiced himself throughout the years. During his ministry many of us have been married by him; we have brought our children to be baptized by him; as families we have gone

in the latter years to our New Year's Prayer Service to be comforted and directed by his mesage for the coming year. And so we will miss his genial smile, his hearty handshake, his subtle humor, and his wise spiritual counsel. Truly a great leader in Israel has fallen!

We remember him in love as our friend, our counselor, and as a true example of a Christian teacher and minister; and with gratitude for his faith, we offer thanksgiving to God for the service which Dr. Vander Meulen rendered while he was with us.

To our friend and co-worker, Mary V. Vander Meulen, and to John, one of our church boys, we express our deepest love and sympathy.

Inasmuch as God, our loving Father, has called from our midst Dr. John M. Vander Meulen to a higher service, we, the women of the Auxiliary of the Second Presbyterian Church, present this memorial to be spread upon our minutes; and a copy to be sent to Mrs. Vander Meulen and John, Jr.

Respectfully submitted,

ELIZABETH AKIN BARBOUR, *Historian,*
Chairman Committee on Resolutions.

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Union Theological Seminary
RICHMOND, VA.

In Memoriam

From Bulletin of

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS

(Pastorate 1917-1920)

WE HAVE sustained a great personal loss by the passing of our honored friend and former minister, Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, last Sunday night. And yet, while we feel the poorer for his death, we are the richer through his life. He held this pastorate from 1917 to 1920. During that time his great gifts and consecrated life made a deep impression both on the church and the community. His caliber received wider recognition. In 1920 he was called to be president of the Louisville Theological Seminary, where, by his teaching ability, his sane counsel, and his pen, he made a valuable contribution to the Presbyterian Church. We rejoice in a life so dedicated to God, and in his swift and triumphant translation to the higher life. But our hearts are still sad at losing him, and our prayers and deep sympathy go out to Mrs. Vander Meulen and to John. May they be daily sustained and blessed by the divine grace.

An Expression of Sympathy

From the

WOMAN'S SOCIETY, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OAK PARK, ILLINOIS

OAK PARK, ILLINOIS,
June 25, 1936.

Dear Mrs. Vander Meulen:

Throughout the years of your friendship to the people of our church, you and Dr. Vander Meulen have brought untold comfort to us in our troubled hours, as well as the supreme joy of knowing you, who lived life with courage and conviction. We have all lost, for a time, a truly great friend, but his undying spirit shall dwell among us always, a part of our church's foundation.

We extend our deepest sympathy to you and John at this time.

Yours most sincerely,

EDITH VON DER HEYDT,
Corresponding Secretary.

An Appreciation

Delivered by

THE REV. WILHELMUS B. BRYAN, JR.

at the Elberon Memorial Church, Elberon, New Jersey
Sunday, June 28, 1936

JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN served this church as your minister during the past twelve years. He would have been with you again this summer had not his Master called him to enter upon life eternal.

The memory of his ministry is with us this morning, his words of encouragement and counsel are in our ears, his exposition of the Scriptures is part of our treasure, his challenge to high spiritual living echoes within our hearts. We remember him with love this opening day.

Born in 1870, Dr. Vander Meulen graduated from Hope College in 1891. He studied at Princeton Theological Seminary and at McCormick Seminary. At first a minister of the Reformed Church he held pastorates in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, Michigan, and supervised Home Missions in Oklahoma. In 1903 he was appointed professor of Psychology and Pedagogy at Hope College, and in that same year added to his responsibilities the pastorate of Hope Church. In 1912 he entered the Presbyterian Church and became pastor of the Second Church in Louisville. He left there to take the First Church in Oak Park, Illinois, which he left in 1920 to become president of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. During the last six years he was professor of Systematic Theology in that institution.

He is affectionately remembered by all who heard him, not only from this pulpit but from the many pulpits throughout the

country from which he spoke, as an eloquent preacher and sound teacher and one who rightly divined the word of truth and justly expounded the gospel of Christ. His voice will be greatly missed by all of us. His memory will burn bright.

He would not have us mourn nor turn aside in sorrow. He would have us rejoice with him in the faith that made him strong and in his Lord, whom he sought so sincerely to serve. Were we to show our devotion to him it could be in no better way than to live justly in our Lord and to further those interests of the Kingdom to which he gave his life. Our gratitude for his twelve summers of faithful service and inspiring preaching from this pulpit may best be shown by our continued loyalty to this church and to our Master, even Jesus Christ.

Memorial

Adopted by the

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY

THE Executive Committee of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, for itself, and in the name of the Board of Directors, desires to place on record this brief tribute to the memory of one who was its head for a number of years, and for a yet longer period was intimately associated with its life and work.

No adequate summary of the life and public services of Dr. Vander Meulen is at this time possible. Coming to us from a church and a collegiate community that had already given us the lamented Dr. Dosker, and that had enriched our pulpits and church life with others of its devoted sons, Dr. Vander Meulen gave to Louisville more than half of his forty years of the ministry of the gospel. For five years he was the brilliant and beloved pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, and for sixteen years he served this seminary as president and professor. His Louisville pastorate furnished the auspicious foundation for his seminary career, for through it was given him not only to inculcate high ideals of what a minister *should* be, but to afford a concrete example of what a minister *could* be.

He brought to his task first of all a clear conception of divine truth as interpreted in the Standards of the Reformed Churches. But to him theology was not an abstract scholastic system, but was the divine remedy for the ills of humanity, and the divine provision for the needs of human souls.

His presentation of this truth, whether in the pulpit or the classroom, was characterized by fine scholarship, great originality of thought, vividness of imagination, and felicity of ex-

pression, irradiated by his sparkling wit and contagious humor, and shot through and through by profound conviction, deep emotion, and broad human sympathies.

This human sympathy was not merely for humanity in the mass, but was for individual men and women. This gave him a great capacity for friendship. He gave himself to his friends without stint, and he drew from them the best that was in them. It was through the ties that he had formed in his ministry here that he was drawn to the Seminary, and that the means were provided by which the Seminary was able to secure his services. Through the same power of drawing people to him he was enabled greatly to enlarge the activities of the Seminary—increasing its endowments, broadening the lines of its culture, and increasing the number of its students.

When he felt obliged to resign the presidency and seek the quieter life of a professor, it was hoped that for many years the Seminary would enjoy the growing fruits of his ripe scholarship, and the benign influence of his radiant personality. These hopes received a severe shock when more than a year ago he was stricken with serious illness. But it was hoped when the Board extended to him a year's leave of absence that the rest and freedom from strain would restore him to health and activity. In the providence of God it was not to be. "Behold, we know not anything." We can only bow to the will of Him who knoweth all things. We can only say with David, "Know ye not that a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel?"

To his bereaved widow and the son of his hopes, we extend our heartfelt sympathy. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, who hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort their hearts, and establish them in every good word and work."

HORACE CADY WILSON, *Secretary,*
Board of Directors.

PEYTON H. HOGE, *Chairman,*
Committee on Resolutions.

Memorial

Adopted by

THE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS' CIRCLE OF LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

THE Presbyterian Ministers' Circle of Louisville, at its regular summer meeting held at Pewee Valley, June 15, 1936, heard with sorrow of the death of our fellow worker, the Rev. John M. Vander Meulen, D.D., and hereby bows in humble submission to God's will and wishes to express its appreciation of the life and works of this man of God.

He was always able to see the possibilities for Christian service in others, and he employed all his splendid talents in inspiring and leading others to follow Christ in the abundant life. With his charming and magnetic personality he won an enduring and valued friendship among all of us, and leaves with us a treasured memory which shall quicken to a larger service in the kingdom of God.

It is our desire to bear our sympathy to Mrs. Vander Meulen, and her son, John, and yet to find a true comfort in the eternal hope in which he lived and in which he now abides.

COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS' CIRCLE:

J. LEIGHTON SCOTT, *Chairman,*
ARTHUR H. KEENEY,
JOSEPH L. GRIER.

An Appreciation

BROADWAY BAPTIST CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Hansford D. Johnson, Minister

THE Broadway Baptist Church wishes to express to Mrs. Vander Meulen our tenderest sympathy for her in the loss of her gifted and noble husband, Dr. John M. Vander Meulen. It was fitting that his lifework should be crowned with the publication of his book, *The Faith of Christendom.* We remember with lasting gratitude his messages to us on this subject. It is meaningful that the book, brought from the press only a few weeks before his death, should close with a chapter on "The Life Everlasting" and that this chapter should close with the quotation:

> "Jerusalem, my happy home,
> *Would God I were in thee!"*

He put that last line in italics, as if to emphasize the "psychological mood" with which his work was finished. Voices in his spirit were calling him home. The beauty and strength of his life will remain for all who knew him, a sanctifying influence which should help them to be better prepared for New Jerusalem.

Adopted by Church in Conference, June 10, 1936.

In Memoriam

From Seminary Students' Summer News Letter

J. Russell Cross, Student Editor

Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, D.D., LL.D., passed away on Sunday, June 7, 1936, 8:30 P. M., at River Forest, Illinois.

We as students who sat at the feet of Dr. Vander Meulen will miss his friendship, his wise counsel, and his unlimited humor. He was endowed with many gifts, each of which was used to the best possible advantage.

When death comes, oftentimes we feel it imperative to express our sympathy to the members of the bereaved family. Here we find it necessary to express our thanks to our Heavenly Father that He allowed our paths to cross with the path of this well-beloved minister and teacher.

We know that the Father has sanctioned the very blow that we find so hard to bear. By faith we are able to give thanks on our Calvary, in the misery of lonely tears, watching by the dearest asleep in their deep sleep. To say then, *Magnificat anima mea,* is to be under the benediction of the Cross, to offer in very truth the sacrifice of praise.

You fellow students will be interested in some of the things that have been said by others, so I am including here some excerpts from editorials, resolutions, and newspaper articles.

"His talents were outstanding. There were few pulpit orators in America who surpassed him in eloquence; he had few superiors in the difficult art of dramatizing religion. In the

field of philosophy he was more than an amateur thinker; and even in the field of administration he made a notable record."

"His sermons, showing the power of a great mind and a great personality, possessing a ready wit, yet a deep and burning sincerity, made Christianity a faith full of challenge—a joyous, uplifting faith that would be worth fighting for. Such, we imagine, was the faith of the early Christians."

"Through his great executive ability and untiring efforts the Presbyterian Seminary gained support that placed it among the leading religious institutions of the country. In the classroom, in the pulpit, in his conversation and daily life, he earnestly taught that a triumphant life depended entirely upon belief in Christ. It was this great faith that gave him power and aroused in his friends such loyal devotion."

His life and death gave meaning to one of his favorite hymns:

"Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword,
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!"

Editorials

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Editorials

Editorial from
THE LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

THE Rev. Dr. John Marinus Vander Meulen, whose death occurred Sunday at River Forest, Illinois, will be missed for many years on many occasions by many people. So varied were his accomplishments that his capacities are difficult to appraise, except to say that they were extraordinary both in degree and scope of adaptability. He ranked high as a preacher, teacher, and executive administrator; and no one was more gracious as a host, more delightful as a companion. In classroom or pulpit he combined the graces of personality and voice with a fluent, illuminating style of discourse in which humor and penetrating analysis were the servants of his ideas. As president of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary he performed a work of permanent value. That done, he resigned to resume more congenial duties. His acquisitive intellect took him far in the field of scholarship; but it didn't take him away from intimate association with his fellow men. He was as wise in the knowledge of humanity as of books and as sympathetic as he was wise. Those who knew Dr. Vander Meulen will estimate him by the qualities with which they were most familiar; but they all will agree as to the sincerity of his character.

Editorial from
THE LOUISVILLE HERALD-POST

A NOTABLE figure among Louisville churchmen has passed away, one who had been prominent on a crowded stage, one most widely esteemed.

Dr. Vander Meulen was of that group of scholars and divines originating in Holland, Michigan, who have, for a number of years, been an ornament of the Presbyterian Church in this city. The tradition they bring to us traces all the way back to those Pilgrim Fathers who took their departure from the Low Countries. Men of independence, stern and strong; men of parts as well as character.

Dr. Vander Meulen had held many offices of leadership and trust. He had endeared himself to many as preacher and pastor. His friends were of all faiths, of all shades of opinion.

Editorial from

THE HOLLAND EVENING SENTINEL
HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

ONE measure of the influence of the late Dr. John M. Vander Meulen is the place he continued to fill in the minds of the people of a community many years after he had left it. Although Holland was his native place, that fact did not account for his continued popularity here. Others who were born here have gone away and have suffered the usual fate of "out of sight out of mind," while Dr. Vander Meulen was regarded until the day of his death as almost a resident and citizen. And he enjoyed the same distinction in other places where he served for a time.

His talents were outstanding. There were few pulpit orators in America who surpassed him in eloquence; he had few superiors in the difficult art of dramatizing religion. In the field of philosophy he was more than an amateur thinker; and even in the field of administration he made a notable record.

Although an orator whom people were always glad to hear, with a voice that would have made the fortune of a statesman and with histrionic ability that an actor might have envied him, Dr. Vander Meulen was far more than a showman even in the best sense of that term. He used showmanship as a means to an end, and his histrionic and oratorical gifts were the outward manifestations of a mind that was strongly centered and well stocked.

One of the detractors of William Jennings Bryan wrote a book about the Commoner that he called *The Biography of a Voice*. Such a book could hardly be written about the most eloquent voice that has come out of this part of Michigan. For Dr. Vander Meulen was always far more than a voice, far more than mere mellifluous sound; he was a thinker who delved deep and who used his golden voice to cause others to think.

He exerted a lasting influence upon the various communities in which he lived as a minister, as a teacher, as an administrator. In view of his talents his life might have been far more spectacular than it was. He chose to remain out of the fierce glare of the limelight, but his influence was all the greater on those with whom he came in contact quietly and naturally. His death marks the passing of one of the most truly distinguished men this community has produced.

Editorial from

THE GRAND RAPIDS PRESS, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Teacher of Preaching

Not only a fine and beloved human being, liked for his kindly humor as well as his many strong qualities of character, but a great teacher of preaching is lost to Protestant churchdom in the United States with the passing of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, until very recently president of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. Dr. Vander Meulen was pastor of Central Reformed Church here and of several other congregations, and served for a time as a professor at Hope College before his call to Louisville.

A speciality of Dr. Vander Meulen's, and probably the work for which he will be remembered longest, was his service in homiletics. He believed that young men going into the ministry need not and should not depend wholly upon inspiration and knowledge of doctrine, but could well develop the fine art of preaching in the same concentrated way that an orator would practice to develop his persuasive talents on the rostrum. There is a rhetoric to preaching differing somewhat from the rhetoric of the lawyer, but with a skill and logic all its own, and there is decidedly no reason why it should be neglected. The church will be the stronger for preachers armed not only with the faith but with the ability to extend that faith by a sound education in the way to preach. Where the church is weak today, it is sometimes for lack of careful schooling in how to convey a message to the congregation. Dr. Vander Meulen not only was a notable practitioner of this art; he taught it to many young men who were to become, and still are to become, persuasive leaders of the church.

Editorial from

THE ELIZABETHTOWN NEWS, ELIZABETHTOWN, KENTUCKY

The Death of a Great Preacher

THE Rev. Dr. John Marinus Vander Meulen, who died suddenly in Chicago, was one of the most outstanding and distinguished preachers in this country, regardless of denomination. He was a gifted orator, at the same time he was essentially spiritual. His sermons thrilled with the power of his words and thought, and at the same time they touched the inner light through deep spiritual significance.

He was for five years pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville, and for ten years he was president of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and resigned on account of bad health. He attended the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church at Augusta, Georgia, and delivered a splendid sermon.

He was in Chicago on his way to see his son graduate at Holland, Michigan, when he was suddenly stricken ill and died in a short time. The death of a man like Dr. Vander Meulen is more than a local loss to Louisville and the Presbyterian Church. It is a distinctive loss to Christianity. To his gift of speech and his spiritual power in the pulpit he added a charming personality, and was much beloved by nearly everyone who came in contact with him. He will be most missed in the Theological Seminary and from the pulpit, in the former as a student and scholar, in the latter as a gifted and eloquent speaker.

Editorial from

THE INTELLIGENCER-LEADER, HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

A Leader Called Home

DR. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN died suddenly last Sunday, June 7, at River Forest, Illinois. He and his wife were visiting at the home of friends when death overtook him. At the time of his death, Dr. Vander Meulen was professor in Doctrinal Theology at the Presbyterian Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. He had held this position ever since 1930, when he resigned from the presidency of that institution. Dr. Vander Meulen was known as a preacher, a teacher, an administrator, and a Christian gentleman. He came to the end of his life "full of honors." Funeral services were held in Holland, Michigan, in the Memorial Chapel of Hope College. Addresses were brought by Dr. A. K. Rule, a colleague of Dr. Vander Meulen, and by Dr. P. H. Pleune, pastor of the Highland Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Kentucky. Both spoke of the sterling qualities of character and faith in Dr. Vander Meulen. Drs. Davidson and Blekkink assisted in the service, which was in charge of Dr. E. D. Dimnent, a lifelong friend of Dr. Vander Meulen.

Dr. Vander Meulen was a native of this part of Michigan, and he spent a part of his professional life in this section. He served the Second Church of Grand Rapids, later consolidated with First to make Central Church; he was pastor of Hope Church, Holland, for many years. In connection with his pastorate in Holland he taught at Hope College. He was a frequent visitor because of his ties of blood and friendship in this community. His only son graduates from Hope College this year, and last fall Dr. Vander Meulen delivered the Convocation address at the College. He spoke on "Life's Punctuation Marks." He mentioned the question mark, the comma, the exclamation point, and the period. One of his auditors last fall was very greatly impressed by that address, and the funeral

services held last Wednesday were forceful reminders to her of the splendid and brilliant things Dr. Vander Meulen presented in that fall Convocation address. She went home from the service with a heart filled, and out of that full heart came the lines, here appended, which express exactly what all Dr. Vander Meulen's friends are thinking and feeling.

A servant sent by God, has from us gone;
God placed a period, for all his work is done.
To us the question mark, for we but grope in gloom,
To him the mark of joyful exclamation
As with the saints he sings in glorious exultation,
For he has entered in his Father's home.
The period has been written—the scroll now finished has been safely stowed—within the ark.
And, 'though we now but grope in gloom—for life is dark—
We know that in that last great day, in glory it will be unrolled
Its writing shining in such glowing beauty
Far greater than the human mind and human heart can hold.

—Written by Mrs. M. De Boer, Holland, Michigan.

Editorial from

THE WESTERN RECORDER, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Death of Dr. Vander Meulen

THE press announces the death on Sunday night, June 7, at Chicago, of Dr. John Marinus Vander Meulen, who for a number of years was president of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, from which position he resigned six years ago, but remained on the faculty until his death. Dr. Vander Meulen had been prominently known, and had rendered important service within his own denomination for many years. He was broadly known and highly regarded among all of the other evangelical groups in connection with his service as president of the Louisville Seminary. He was a man of marked scholarship, and the author of several books. He was also an administrator of unusual skill, and the institution at Louisville almost tripled in attendance under his guidance. His death takes away one whose life had high meaning, not only within his own denomination, but to all evangelical faiths and fellowships.

Personal Newspaper Tributes from "The Point of View" Column of the Louisville Courier-Journal

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Personal Newspaper Tributes

To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

May I, through the Point of View Column, pay a tribute to the recently deceased John M. Vander Meulen, D.D.? In days gone by I had the privilege of being one of his parishioners.

In this age of shifting loyalties and often waning faith this fiery evangel could say with Saint Paul: "I know whom I have believed."

He had his tender side. Whoever read with such tender sympathy as did Dr. Vander Meulen those simple words of the Psalmist: "The poor . . . and him who hath no helper."

Little children, ever accurate judges of human beings, found him charming.

Finally, like the Master whom he loved and served, it can be said of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen, "The common people heard him gladly."

NEAL R. EDMONDS.

Louisville, Kentucky.

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To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

The memory of his beautiful and powerful Christian life, his tender sympathy, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, will always be fresh in the minds of those of us who were privileged to know him through the years since he was called to the Second Presbyterian Church in 1912. A wonderful organizer and upbuilder, his was an intense devotion to any cause to which he dedicated his loyalty. His testimony at all times was clear and unequivocal. Never did his faith shine more brightly than in

the last days of his career. In his unflinching trust he met cheerfully, even heroically, whatever was wrapped up in God's will.

MATTIE P. BROWN.

Louisville.

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To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

To those who were inspired by his preaching, it will never be too late to add a word of praise to the memory of Dr. Vander Meulen. His sermons, showing the power of a great mind and a great personality, possessing a ready wit, yet a deep and burning sincerity, made Christianity a faith full of challenge—a joyous, uplifting faith that would be worth fighting for. Such, we imagine, was the faith of the early Christians.

It seems only a short while ago that the old Second Church joined with him heart and soul in one of his favorite hymns—

"Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death."

A. A.

Louisville.

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To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

The death of Dr. John M. Vander Meulen is an irreparable loss to the city of Louisville. As a member of the Second Presbyterian Church for fifty years, I would like to pay a tribute to this great spiritual leader. When he came as pastor to the Second Presbyterian Church life held for me all the joys, happiness, and blessings that a woman in the early thirties could wish. My husband was deeply interested in all the civic and religious interests of the city, a man of vision and with the promise of the most brilliant future. Two lovely children, a happy and contented family life, which Dr. Vander Meulen and Mrs. Vander Meulen shared with us on many occasions.

My husband served with deep interest as deacon and leader of the men's organization for three years, until death came and removed from us the father and husband of this lovely home life. When one is young and richly blessed, religious training given in youth by one's mother and father is more or less a beautiful theory, but when this tragic blow came to me the light went out of my life and I wondered if my early religious training would sustain me in this great loss. It was then that I learned to know the soul of this great man. Day after day he came to help me in my loneliness, to show me where to find the strength to carry on. It was his great faith in the eternal values of life and the fullness of joy in the life after death that strengthened my faith. In giving this expression of appreciation to Dr. Vander Meulen I believe I am voicing the experience of many others who found the same great comfort and solace in his ministry while he was pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church.

MRS. JOHN D. WAKEFIELD.

Louisville.

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To the Editor of the Courier-Journal:

May I pay my tribute to the passing of a great man, Dr. John M. Vander Meulen. Many beautiful things have been said about him both in our local newspapers and those of other cities. There are two outstanding qualities that have not been mentioned that to my mind are the greatest.

The first is his rare humility. Although I knew him intimately for years, I had never heard him mention the fact that he had raised over $1,000,000 for the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, and not until the week of his death, when I called at his office and asked him for the list of those who had given directly from his solicitation, did I have any idea of the amount he had raised.

When he became president of the Seminary in 1920 it was a small institution, not only financially, but with an enrollment

of only thirty-eight students. In ten short years he increased the student body to ninety-six. He made it an institution, for a time at least, that the Presbyterian Church could be proud of. The passion of his life was to make Christ pre-eminent. When he resigned as president of the Seminary, he allowed no honors to be bestowed upon him. He wanted them all for his Master. But in this he had unwittingly become truly great, for in the words of Christ, true greatness exists only in unselfish service.

The Holland *Evening Sentinel* says of him: "In view of his talents his life might have been far more spectacular than it was. He chose to remain out of the fierce glare of the limelight, but his influence was all the greater on those with whom he came in contact quietly and naturally. His death marks the passing of one of the most truly distinguished men this community has produced."

The second great quality was his marvelous courage. He had the courage to stand for his convictions, no matter what people thought or said. He was no middle-of-the-road man. He came out squarely for every great issue in which he was involved. It could never be said of him that he was neither hot nor cold.

In the words of James I. Vance: "He was strong in purpose and strong in action; first, last, and always—strong! It needs neither title nor crown to argue the imperial majesty of such manhood. It is faith in God that makes men strong."

He has slipped quietly away, this prince of men, knowing that he had fought a good fight, had finished his course, had kept the faith.

LOUISE MARSHALL.

Louisville.

Writings of Dr. Vander Meulen

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Writings of Dr. Vander Meulen

One of the things to which Dr. Vander Meulen looked forward while president of the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary was the time when he could lay aside his duties as executive and administrator and devote his time to teaching and writing. His heart was set on this, and even in the busy days of his presidency he managed to publish a small book containing a series of sermons addressed particularly to golfers. The title of the book is *Getting Out of the Rough.*

When he became professor of Doctrinal Theology in 1930 he began immediately to write, preparing syllabi for his classes. Some of these he hoped eventually to use as the basis for his own textbook in doctrinal theology. To this end he was continually revising and improving the syllabi as experience taught wise, and he planned to spend the summer (of 1936) going over certain sections to make the work more complete.

Some years ago he made a very thorough study of the Johannine problem and prepared a syllabus for his students which was of great value. In conjunction with the Rev. Andrew K. Rule, Ph.D., professor of Apologetics in the Louisville Seminary, Dr. Vander Meulen also prepared a very full syllabus on "Recent Trends in Theology," starting with Schleiermacher and coming down to the present day. For his seminar in Christology he prepared a syllabus, divided into two sections: "The Person of Christ" or "The Incarnation," and "The Work of Christ" or "The Atonement." He also prepared a syllabus on "The Theology of Crisis"—an interpretation of the Barthian Theology. For the further use of his students he translated into English some of the works of Dr. J. Karl Heim, of Tuebingen, Germany. He had in mind the publication of a book

of his most popular sermons; a small but comprehensive book dealing with the subject of "Sin"; a book containing his lectures on "The Preacher," delivered last year in Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, and others. His death has interrupted all these plans.

Just two weeks prior to his passing, however, he had the joy of receiving from the publishers (the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia) copies of his last book—*The Faith of Christendom*—a series of sermons powerfully presenting the great truths of the Apostles' Creed. Dr. Sampey, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, says of it: "Dr. Vander Meulen here gives us a volume of sermons which is worthy of wide reading by preachers and intelligent laymen of all denominations. It will quicken faith, promote fellowship among all who love our Lord, and make brighter our hope for the world to come."

In itself the book is a graphic portrayal of Dr. Vander Meulen in the method and power of his preaching, and the passion of his soul as a minister of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Jesus Christ is the central figure, but in the strong light thrown upon his Lord, the author himself stands revealed.

Dr. Vander Meulen's Last Sermon

In May, 1936, the Presbyterian Church in the United States met in a Jubilee Assembly marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding at Augusta, Georgia, in 1861.

Dr. Vander Meulen was asked to preach the Jubilee Sermon on Sunday evening, May 24, on the Assembly theme—"Christ and His Church First." It was the final sermon in Dr. Vander Meulen's earthly ministry.

Christ and His Church First

Text: "That in all things he might have the preeminence."
—Colossians 1:18.

Every age of the world has needed Christ. He was needed in the Garden of Eden after the first man and the first woman had fallen, and there has not been a moment of the history of the race since that He has not been its supreme need.

It is sometimes thought that there never was an age that so needed Him as the age in which He sojourned in human flesh and went to the cross. Some case, I suppose, might be made out for that.

Luke tells us of the year when the Baptist and Jesus began their ministry. He says—and note the significance of each name—"Now in the fifteenth year of . . . Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee . . . Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests." Was there ever such a bunch of scoundrels in power and in the very places that were most significant for humanity? Tyrants, dictators, hypocrites had a stranglehold on the world's life. In the center of that ring stood Jesus and dared

claim that His will and His kingdom should come first, and demanded an allegiance of his fellow men that no sane man has ever asked of them before or since. There was just one thing that could save the world in that crisis, in that hour of the Prince of Darkness. It was a group of men who in all things would put Christ first.

I

The Church of the First Centuries

And the company of disciples in the church of the first Christian centuries accepted that challenge. Oh, how they accepted it!

In my choice of them for illustrations I have hesitated somewhat to mention the name of Polycarp because he has been so often mentioned and there are so many others. The annual festival of Caesar was being celebrated at Smyrna. So the officers, urged on by the mob, arrested Polycarp, the leading Christian minister of the place. "Swear by the genius of Caesar," they said; "blaspheme Christ." Some of his friends had been urging him to it, his enemies were threatening him and all awaited the answer. Then it came: "Eighty and six years have I served my Christ . . . How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" They threatened him with the stake. " 'Tis well," replied Polycarp; "I fear not the fire that burns for a season and after a while is quenched. Why delayest thou? Come do what thou wilt." Then the heathen mob joined vociferously by the Jews—strange and significant alliance—clamoured that he should be burnt alive. And in an incredibly short time the pile was ready. They bound him to the stake. Such a death seems almost like a sacrament.

These martyrs had to maintain their loyalty to Christ often in the face of the pleadings of their family. Perpetua, a young expectant mother who had been thrown into jail awaiting her execution for Christ's sake, had given birth there to her baby. Her father came pleading with her to yield to the worship of Caesar. "Daughter," he said, "have pity on my gray hairs;

behold thy brothers, thy mother, . . . behold the child who cannot live without thee." She comforted him as best she could but she could not yield. And, writes the historian of that early conflict, "the Christians marched in procession from the prison to the arena as if they were marching to heaven with joyous countenances, agitated rather by gladness than fear. Perpetua followed with radiant step as became the bride of Christ," singing psalms as she went. Browning in his "Epitaph in the Catacombs" has expressed the experience of a martyr in death:

"I was some time in being burned,
But at the close a Hand came through
The fire above my head, and drew
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.
Sergius a brother, writes for me
This testimony on the wall—
For me, I have forgot it all."

But long before the hand came through at the close they already knew He was with them, the fourth one in the fiery furnace.

From the records of that ancient martyrology comes the famous one of those forty soldiers for Christ's sake turned naked in the dead of winter and the bitterest wind on an Armenian lake chanting till the last one dropped:

"Forty wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Claim for Thee the victory and from Thee the crown."

And the victory they claimed came overwhelmingly. The younger Pliny, Roman Governor of Bithynia, writes to the Emperor Trajan at the close of that first century that the Christians "pervaded not merely the cities but the villages and the country places, so that the temples were nearly deserted."

Nothing could withstand that spirit. Relatively the greatest power the world has ever seen was the Roman Empire. But it went down at last, had to capitulate to Christianity before a church that had emblazoned on its banner and engraven in its heart, Christ First.

And that slogan and that life they fling across the centuries to us.

II

The Challenge to Us

We are living once more in a day when the world is challenging Christianity. It challenges Christianity both by its desperate need and by its bitter opposition.

It is sufficiently evident that the world, the modern civilized world, cannot long endure as it is. The forces of disruption in it, of which war and the class struggle are only two phenomena, have already in large geographical areas uprooted the whole order and seem destined soon, unless something happens to prevent it, to plunge the modern world into a destructive chaos beyond anything in its history. It is not merely religion that is threatened. Art, music, literature, culture, philanthropy, and all that refines and ennobles is threatened, too. No one wants war apparently. But obviously, too, no one or nothing—not sociology or business or science or education—can do anything to stop it.

We are celebrating our seventy-fifth anniversary of our Church. President Roosevelt has coined the phrase "Horse and buggy days" for the age of our fathers. Well, I for one believe that that was a better age than this one, better days for peace and contentment and character, better days in which to bring up one's children, better days for the things that count, easier days in which to live a Christian life.

But if we would go back, we cannot. We have to go on living Christian lives in the age in which we live. As Christians and as a Church we have to conquer the world or be conquered by it. Well, can the Church do it? Certainly not, as it is at present. It cannot be done by a church that has one foot in the kingdom of Christ and the other in the very paganism from which it must seek to extricate men and society. There is only one way in which the Church can conquer the world. It is to do what those early Christians did. It is to put Christ first.

1. First of all to put Christ first means to put Him first in industry.

Calvinism has sometimes been identified with capitalism. The reason is that Calvin did not confine himself to writing a theology but set up a political government at Geneva, of which he was the ruling and reforming spirit.

The accusation, as Professor Georgia Harkness of Elmira College has shown (in her *John Calvin*), is far-fetched. So far from creating the capitalistic order, Calvin restrained and modified its evils at Geneva.

But quite apart from Calvin's political practice at Geneva, there is nothing, so far as I can see, in Calvinism as a religion or a theological system to endorse capitalism rather than any other industrial order. Indeed, I wonder whether without Calvinism the evils of capitalism can ever be cured. Reve Gellouin, a French writer, has said, "The modern industrial order could never have been born without complete oblivion of God and a profound contempt for man." But Calvin is by common consent the man who most sought to honor God. And he sought likewise righteousness between man and man.

But Calvinism to one side, let me insist that Christianity in general is not identified with any particular industrial system. Christianity could probably flourish under socialism or communism as well as under a capitalistic theory of industry. If our fathers were wise enough not to identify the spirituality of their religion with any particular form of politics, their sons would be wise not to identify Christianity with any form of industry. What we must insist on is that in any form of industry Christ must be first. The truth of the matter is that there is no form of industry into which sin does not enter as a destructive element. The only thing that can save it is Christ.

We are still living under a capitalistic system of industry in this country. But it is on trial. It has failed as a moral and spiritual force. It has resulted in too great unevenness between rich and poor and above all in too little brotherliness between them. It has been both unjust and unmerciful, more unjust perhaps than unmerciful. There is only one thing that can save this world, only one thing that can save industry at all in the world

today. The great group of individuals who belong to Christ must commence to do the will of Christ first in industry. They have no right to wait till others do that too. Each follower of Christ must begin to take the initiative himself. He must say with Joshua: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." There are bound to be some hardships. There may even be some industrial martyrdoms. But listen to the challenge that comes from the church of these first centuries, and from the most illustrious martyr of all awaiting execution in a prison cell at Rome—let every Christian man in industry think of it: "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ."

2. Christ first in politics.

But if to put Christ first means to put him first in industry, it means to put him first in politics and the state. For the great choice which those early Christians had to make was the choice between Christ and Caesar. It is the choice which the Christian of our modern day has increasingly to make. Indeed, it would seem as if the next great martyrdom of the Church, if there is to be one, is to be a martyrdom of the Church by the State. What the Church has actually to recognize is a state that will not tolerate loyalty to anything above it, not even God. That attitude did not begin with Hitler. It began long before that. The former German emperor in addressing his subjects, before the World War was yet in the horizon, "called upon his loyal subjects to be faithful in the performance of their duties, urging as a motive that after death they were to appear before God . . . and His Christ? . . . No; but before God and the Great Emperor." (Kuyper's Stone Lectures, p. 286.)

And do you suppose that in Italy the sentiment and slogan is Christ first or is it Mussolini? And unless all signs fail the Church may have to face that question everywhere, as in that ancient day, even here in America, whether she will place Christ or Caesar first.

Now farthest be it from me on this unique occasion to try and introduce politics in the pulpit. But what I am saying is that quite apart from partisan politics there are tendencies in America to place the State first and not Christ. Was it not our own Supreme Court that, to a distinguished man who had lived and toiled here many years, refused citizenship because he would not take an oath to go out and fight in any war in which this country might engage, no matter how much he might think it contrary to his own conscience and the will of Christ?

There is an easy solution of the problem of international politics and threatened world disruption today. Someone tells the story of an English father who gave to his boy a puzzle map of the world. The man said to the boy: Here are those blocks. Put them together aright and if you finish it today I will give you five pounds. If you do not finish it till tomorrow, I will give you only one. In a surprisingly short time the boy came back to the man with the blocks together and the puzzle done. "How did you do it so soon?" asked the father in surprise. "Well, Dad, I happened to see that there was the figure of a man on the back of those blocks and by putting him together I had the map of the world." On the back of all this world's puzzle in international or local politics and statesmanship today is the figure of Christ. And the problem of world and race and national relations can only be solved if we have the nerve to believe in that solution and to say: As for me, whether the question relates to war or peace, wherever I touch politics or statemanship, I will put not party or policy or even my country first. I will put Christ first. You cannot pray for Christ's kingdom to come in statemanship and international relations until you do. Across the centuries the challenge comes to us from the men who had to choose Christ or Caesar. Will you swear it!

"Forty wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Claim for Thee the victory."

3. And the third sphere in which every Christian must put Christ first is the sphere of education. If, as a Christian, I am

bound to put Christ first in the other spheres, I am bound to place Him first in this one. For that, too, the example comes from those early Christian centuries. They established great catechetical schools, the most famous of which was the one at Alexandria which influenced the lives of so many of the great leaders of the day.

Now if there is any sphere of our American life that is pagan today, it is the sphere of education. It is so obviously true of our great universities that I suppose no one would care to dispute it. When it comes even to so precious a thing as the faith of their children, many a man and woman, even professedly Christian men, put Harvard or Yale or some other like institution above the name of Christ. And presently our boys and girls come back from these institutions with a thoroughly pagan view of life. It is not so that we can wrestle for Christ, or claim for Him the victory.

If the result had been a moral uplift in society or even an increase in human happiness, our mouths might still in part be stoppen from any criticism. But hear what the modern pagans themselves have to say of the result. Here, to cite almost at randon, is Will Durant. He writes: "So far as character is concerned we have probably retrogressed; subtility of thought has grown at the expense of stability of soul; in the presence of our fathers we intellectuals feel uncomfortably that though we surpass them in the number of ideas we have crowded into our heads, . . . we are inferior to them in uncomplaining courage, fidelity to our tasks and purposes, and simple strength of personality."

We have no doubt become mechanically much more scientific. But in the larger world, in the nation, in the home, we know less about the art of getting along together than ever we did. James Truslow Adams has put it very graphically when he writes: "Any astronomer (today) can predict with absolute accuracy where every star in the Heavens will be at half-past eleven tonight. He can make no such prediction about his young daughter." That's the state of our higher education today. And it is not a success.

Dr. Abraham Kuyper, the distinguished premier of the Netherlands, in his Princeton Stone Lectures, put the matter better than I can. He said: "But even the intellect does not constitute the mind. Personality is seated more deeply in the hidden recesses of our inner being, where character is formed, whence the flame of enthusiasm is kindled, where the moral foundations are laid, where love's blossoms bud, whence spring consecration and heroism, and where, in the sense for the Infinite, our time-bound existence reaches out into the very gates of eternity. It is in regard to this seat of personality that we hear on all sides the complaint of impoverishment, degeneracy, and petrifaction."

Our higher education does not even put personality first, much less Christ. The challenge comes to the modern Church to change all that, to provide at least some substitute where the Church will do what the State does not. Now what has the Church done in our day by way of a substitute.

a. It has instituted, first of all, the denominational or so-called Christian college. I would not like to show any lack of appreciation of the denominational college. I myself am a graduate of one. I sent my son to one for his college education. These so-called Christian colleges are smaller than the great secular universities and that is, I think, an advantage to personality. The professors are practically always professing Christians. And that prevents at least any direct and open opposition to the faith of Christianity.

But speaking honestly among ourselves, I think the average denominational college, with perhaps the exception of some few academies among the mountains, needs itself to be converted from the president down. For the consciousness of the average denominational college is not a Church consciousness or a Christ consciousness but a mere intellectual consciousness at best. Its real aim is not making thoroughly consecrated and passionately Christian men who will also be educated. Its real aim is making educated men who will also, so far as possible, be Christian.

That's something, but it isn't enough. There is really far less difference between the moral and spiritual atmosphere in a secular university and that same atmosphere in a denominational college than the Church has a right to expect. At any rate, if a boy comes out of his denominational college a passionate Christian, it is not generally due to his college but to some wholly incidental cause.

What the Church needs to say to its colleges is "Make Christ first." Remember the words of Paul? "For whom we suffer the loss of all things." Make our boys Christians. You may have to change your president, or some clever professor. You may have to lose some of the vainglory of the world, your standing in the Accredited Association of Colleges, and what has been called "the vulgar display of knowledge." But what we want first of all from you is that you shall train our youth in their intellectual life to make Christ first. What we want is that you shall turn out Christian leadership. Otherwise you are not worth our sacrifice.

b. There is a second attempt the Church has made to remedy the entirely pagan character of our secular education. It is by building up a system of religious education in our churches themselves. A decade or so ago that was thought to be the great secret of the Church's revival and power. It would be through an improved Sunday school. Chairs were established in our seminaries in that subject. Volumes of literature came from the press pertaining to it, nearly all pretty thin but sounding a high note of educational authority. If only the right psychological methods could be applied in our Sunday schools, the Church would see such an interest and enthusiasm for the Sunday school and the church as the Church had never seen before. Evangelism had already become somewhat discredited. It would be no longer needed. There would scarcely be any need even of conversion. Religious education would do it all.

Now let us recognize frankly the good there has been in this movement. It is well that in our Sunday schools, as in our secular schools, we should use a good psychological and peda-

gogical method of teaching rather than a poorer one. It is well, too, that we should know what psychology can contribute to our understanding of the child nature and the adolescent nature with which we have to deal.

But why in spite of all this effort has it proved to be such a disappointment that even the Liberals who have chiefly espoused it have already begun to regard it as passé? Why has it not increased the interest of our youth in religion? Does it not show that there has been something vitally lacking in it all? Is it not high time that we were turning our Sunday schools from pedagogical institutions into an evangelistic force with a will to make Christ first?

III

The Way to Meet the Challenge

Now if in this and in other spheres the challenge comes from the fathers of the first centuries and from the fathers of the last one to place Christ first, there are two ways in which we can do it.

1. The first is through a sacrificial Church. There can be no true Church unless it is a sacrificial Church.

The Church has been called in Scripture the bride of Christ. But what sort of a bride is she who is not willing through the travail of her body and soul to bring forth the bridegroom's children?

The Church has been called in Scripture the body of Christ. But Christ's body was a sacrificial one. It bears the marks of that sacrifice through all eternity. What sort of a body of Christ is that which is not a sacrificial one?

a. The Church has been defined as the company of the elect. This is supposed to be a peculiarly Presbyterian definition. And as such I accept it. But that of which I want to remind us all is that to be one of the elect is no sinecure. Jesus, the Head of the Church, was among the elect. Peter quotes the Scripture

concerning Him: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious." Yet, for that election, He had to go to a cross. And the bitter marks of that election are on Him forever.

Paul, who talks most of election, was, as he himself believed, among the elect. Yet think of what it meant for him. To use his own words, "In prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft." And think of the anguish of his spirit, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." The marks of his election were on his body, too, and on his soul.

You think you belong to the Church, the company of God's elect? Unbare me your body then, or unbare me your soul. Show me the marks on it. If there are none there acquired in the service of making Christ first, don't tell me you are among the elect. The marks of it are not there. You have not in the words of the Apostle Peter made your calling and election sure. Can you say with Paul, "I bear in my body"—and he might have added, in my spirit—"the marks of the Lord Jesus"? Have you the "stigmata"? Is his mark on your forehead? It is only such a sacrificial Church that can be coupled with Christ in the one breath of my theme, "Christ and His Church First."

b. But the Church is not merely the company of God's elect. Something more needs to be added to that definition. It is also a Fellowship. And I want to emphasize this word Fellowship. For without that Fellowship the Church cannot hope to conquer the world.

The Church is not chiefly an organization. I find the word "fellowship" and "communion" used regarding it repeatedly in the New Testament, but the word "organization" not once. I do not want to minimize organization. I merely want to emphasize fellowship. If I read the Gospels and the Epistles aright, Jesus and those early Christians set more store on fellowship than on organization. Would not the average minister of a well-organized, perhaps too well organized, church be wise to do the same?

Nothing less than such fellowship will sustain the Church in what Raymond Robins calls "the heavy work" that lies before us. No anaemic, half-hearted, chicken-livered church can do it. It can only be if here, there, and everywhere in industry, in politics, in education there shall once more appear groups of men sustained by fellowship with Christ and with each other, chanting as it were the old song:

"Forty wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Claim for Thee the victory."

2. But if the one essential of victory over the world for Christ is a sacrificial church, the other is a Great Faith. And when I say a great faith, I mean faith in Him and nothing less. For there are things, even things high and holy, that are made to displace Him. And when I name two of them I almost fear you will be startled.

a. The first one is the Bible.

It seems strange indeed that the Bible should ever become a substitute for Christ. And yet I fear that this is often precisely the case. There is no doubt that many a college thinks itself Christian because it has a compulsory Bible course. But the Bible is interesting from other viewpoints than its main one. It is, for example, a wonderful piece of literature, and may be studied from that standpoint. It is also the literature of a historic religion and may be considered from that standpoint. Nor is it much better when seminary courses in the Bible are so taught that the student learns merely the message of Moses or of Job or of Amos or of Jeremiah and the prophets. All that, let me say, is to obscure the main figure.

Jesus once gave a great Bible course. It was on the day of His resurrection. It was to the Emmaus disciples. We read: "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." And you will remember that He once said to His enemies: "Ye search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have

eternal life; and these are they which testify of me." Unless the faith of the Church shall be resounding not even the Bible but Christ first, it will not be wrestling for Him and it will not win the victory.

b. And the second startling substitute for Christ is the Jesus of History.

I trust that will startle you. I remember how it startled me as a boy when I first saw a volume of essays by "The Hibbert Journal" entitled *Jesus or Christ?* I did not know until I had read the book what it meant. I had always thought that the two, Jesus and Christ, were identical. I had not separated them in my mind.

But the import of it all, as I soon found, was the distinction between those to whom Jesus was of interest and importance for the historic human life he lived here on earth, and those to whom He was important because He was the atoning and resurrected Son of God.

Now I surely sympathize with those who love to study the historic human life of Jesus here on earth. What lessons of beauty and of duty do not sparkle from it! But the thing of which I would remind you is that even the writing of the human life of Jesus in the Gospels was for the most part an afterthought with the apostles. It was intended as an interpretation and illumination of the divine Christ. Did not Paul say that if we have known Christ after the flesh yet now we know him so no more?

And if we are charged, as liberalism does charge us, with having gone in our interpretation beyond a mere humanistic conception of Jesus of Nazareth, "We can but answer," as Dr. Kuyper said in his Stone Lectures at Princeton, that "not this modern conception of Jesus of Nazareth, but the Church's confession of the Christ is the one that has conquered the world, and that century after century the best and most pious of our race have paid homage to the Christ of tradition and rejoiced in Him as their Saviour in the shadow of death."

It was only in the faith of that supreme Christ that the Church once conquered the world. It is only in that faith that she can conquer it again. It is not the ever-lengthening historical line back to a human life of Jesus on earth that is the strength of the Church, but the short perpendicular line to the living and reigning and ever-present Christ.

The fathers of seventy-five years ago made no mistake about these things. They were of a sacrificial spirit, and they believed in Christ first. We are facing heavier odds today than they did. The question in the world today is whether there will be any Christian Church or Christian civilization seventy-five years from now. If there is, nothing but a sacrificial spirit and a supreme faith will have made possible the triumph.

The question I leave with you is whether you and you and you will be of some company that says:

"Forty wrestlers, wrestling for Thee, O Christ,
Claim for Thee the victory."